Digitized by Google
Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES

Digitized by Google
Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google
Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google
Original from
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

[c. 1860.] Note col'd plo.!
to repair pages:

161

181

Front cover inset
w/a MIRROR

THE

SECRET HABITS

OF

THE FEMALE SEX;

LETTERS ADDRESSED TO A MOTHER ON THE EVILS OF SOLITUDE, AND ITS SEDUCTIVE TEMPTATIONS TO YOUNG GIRLS, THE PREMATURE

VICTIMS OF A PERNICIOUS PASSION,

WITH ALL ITS FRIGHTFUL CONSEQUENCES:

DEFORMITY OF MIND AND BODY, DESTRUCTION OF BEAUTY,

AND ENTAILING DISEASE AND DEATH;

BUT FROM WHICH, BY ATTENTION TO THE TIMELY WARNING HERE GIVEN, THE DEVOTEE MAY BE SAVED, AND BECOME AN ORNAMENT TO SOCIETY, A VIRTUOUS WIFE, AND A REFULGENT MOTHER!

This Work should be read by all classes; while it forcibly describes the Misery attendant upon Solitude, it prescribes a Medical Treatment and regimen which has never failed of success.

From the French of Jean Dubois, M. D

NEW-YORK:

SOLD BY THE BOOKSELLERS GENERALLY

SECRET HABITS OF FEMALES.

We have already had occasion, thus early in our career,* to say more than once, that of all the causes of disease, there was none more fruitful than that secret vice to which the name of onanism, or self-pollution, has been given. Among young females, more particularly, does this vice exist to an alarming extent; and it is scarcely possible for an unprofessional person to conceive the long train of ills it engenders It is the knowledge of this fact that induces us to present to the world a series of essays on this all-important topic.

To the mothers of England we address them, with the two-fold view of furnishing them with the means of preserving the morals of their daughters, and of sparing them the pain and sorrow of seeing them wither and perish at an age when they ought to be the ornament of their domestic circle, when they ought to enjoy health and happiness. These essays, which were originally addressed, in the form of letters, by a celebrated French physician, to a young invalid, who had brought on her illness by addiction to this very life-destroying habit, will

* First published in the People's Medical Adviser.

enable the parents or guardians of youth to recognise, by numberless symptoms, the gradual disease which day by day is hurrying them to the tomb; and it is hoped, that by the means of which we shall speak, many a life may be saved. These letters we have translated, adding to or altering them according to the result of our experience, and in the words of the original author himself, we would say, "Let every mother of a family (I address equally those to whom the education of the young is entrusted), read this work,—let her learn from it whether her children or charge are chaste and free from this vice; if they have strayed from the paths of honor, let her counsel them to read these letters."

LETTER I.

My young friend,—If satisfaction of the purest kind,—satisfaction most grateful to the heart of man,—such satisfaction as results only from acts of benevolence,—frequently accompanies the practise of the medical art, it is alas! too frequently also accompanied by sorrow and anxiety. Much pain does it oft-times cost the physician, when he is compelled to speak that which he knows or thinks. How difficult and delicate is the task too often imposed on him. Of such a nature is that which I am called upon to fulfill towards you.

I wish to call virtue and morality to the rescue of health, reason to the succor of reason herself. In a word, I would wish to save you from dishonor, disease, and death.

I shall speak to you as I would speak to my own

daughter, whom I love excessively; but I shall also speak as to a daughter who errs without knowing it.

You would wish to enjoy health. In every way, in all your natural functions, symptoms of disease are manifest. Your color might, nay should, in freshness and beauty, emulate the rose. It has vanished: you are pale and sickly. High spirits, gaiety, and vivacity were once your companions. You are now only feeble and languid; and there is nothing to justify so great a change. What then is it?

There is an error—there are some who even call it a crime, but a word so harsh is not needed for you—an error which, secretly produced by perhaps natural desires, but opposed to chastity and honor, seduces the mind, overpowers reason, and drags those who yield to it, often when they themselves most fear it, from innocence and virtue.

Terrible, dangerous! fatal error! And perhaps—there are symptoms which induces me to fear it—perhaps you are the victim of this error. It may be that it is your feelings, the warmth of your temperament, which should bear the blame; but allow me to beg that you would not lay this flattering unction to your soul. Why should you, when your own reason and judgment teach you that it is an error you commit, suffer yourself to become a sad and miserable victim? No, I am sure you will not. Society must not thus be deprived of one of its ornaments;—it will lose too much, it will lose the example of those virtues with which you are blessed.

Have you ever seen a lovely flower, when the least breath would scatter its leaves to the wind, and yet retaining all its original loveliness? Such a flower are you: unless you be warned in time.

like it you will perish, and leave your sorrowing relatives to murmur at your loss. Listen, then, to the warning voice. Read, attentively read, these letters.

Health and beauty are not the only blessings I wish to preserve for you. The error into which, I fear, you have fallen, takes from you, slowly, but surely, all moral feeling, all proper sentiments: it annihilates the happiest gifts of intellect; it deprives you of all esteem of yourself; and destroys every hope of happiness.

These are the reasons which lead me to hope that you will grant me your best attention. I demand it for those letters which shall follow this, and which I shall write for your sole interest.

LETTER II.

My young friend,—I shall proceed in this letter to inform you what alterations your health will undergo from the effect of that error which may possibly have led you astray. The description of them may appear to you frightful, but remember hope must not be entirely banished. She has not yet flown, if you have not altogether fled from virtue.

Those individuals who yield themselves up to the enjoyment of solitary pleasure, to secret pernicious habits, soon exhibit, more or less, the symptoms of tabes dorsalis (a species of consumption). At first they are not troubled with fever; and, although they may still preserve their appetite, their bodies waste away, and they have a sensation as though insects were creeping along the spine. Walking,

more particularly in uneven places, wearies them and produces copious perspirations, head-ache, and ringing in the ears, derangement of the brain and nerves supervenes, terminated by stupidity. The stomach becomes deranged, the patient is pale, dull, and indolent. If young, they assume the appearance and have all the infirmities of decrepid old age; their eyes are hollow, their bodies thin and flawed, their legs can no longer sustain them, they are totally unhinged, they are incapable of any exertion, and in some cases are attacked with palsy.

The weakness and constitutional injury thus produced are the reasons that such patients bear less easily those diseases which are common to all. The chest in particular becomes easily affected. Even the most robust girls are soon rendered weak; and sometimes a slow fever, sometimes a rapid consumption, terminates the scene.

Such are some of the evils produced by solitary imprudence—evils which have attracted the attention of some of the most celebrated physicians of antiquity, as Hippocrates, Coden, Celsus, Areteus, and Atius.

Many other physicians who have enjoyed great celebrity in more modern times, confirm these observations of the ancients, and even increase the frightful catalogue of ills, which the medical writers of antiquity had described in their works. The names of men of such celebrity as Sanctorius, Lommius, Hoffman, Boerhave, Van Sweiten, Kloehof, Mechel, Huller, and Harvey, all of whom have described in vivid and fearful colors the diseases of those who are addicted to solitary vices, must convince the most sceptical. But enough, my dear young friend, for the present. Let me for the present, conclude with the words of Hoffeland, who, speaking generally of those young girls, who are

the victims of this fearful vice, says— "She is a withered rose, a tree whose bloom is dried up; she is a walking spectre."

LETTER III.

I CANNOT avoid commencing this letter with a reflection. You are young, beautiful, and clever; and I am talking to you of infirmities. You ought only to hear the tributes of admiration and affection, and I am calling your attention to the most frightful particulars. There appears to be no connection between such different objects: but if I do present these frightful pictures to you, it is, that they may not in your case be realized, that they may not rob you of all that imparts to your beauty and happiness; it is, that a far greater misfortune may in time be avoided by you. I will continue, then, the quotations I commenced in my last letter.

Lieutand, in speaking of the causes, ordinary and extraordinary, of atrophy, says, that there is no more possible cause for it than the habits of solitary indulgence.

"The want of sufficient nourishment," says he, "great losses of the vital fluids, long continued fluxes, excessive labor, immoderate study, bad and debauched habits, and above all *solitary indulgence* —the most filthy and the most murderous vice— all give rise to atrophy. This disease has many stages and degrees; it is sometimes light, but often severe and fatal. General exhaustion is the principal symptom which characterises it. The legs refuse their office; the senses are rendered

dull, and the patient appears stupid. The greate number have fever, sometimes transient, but more frequently of long continuance and irregular, accompanied with swoons, delirium, and other severe symptoms, respiration is quick, hurried, and oftentimes restrained. Death too frequently terminates the sad scene; sometimes a sudden syncope takes off the patient before they are aware that they are seriously ill, while others drag on an unhappy life, whose close is indeed miserable. The sufferings of some are terminated by a copious hœmorrhage.

"I have seen patients even thus seriously affected—leaving out of the description the syncope and mortal hœmorrhage—whose health was re-established, despite all outward appearances, by returning to proper habits; but it is absolutely necessary that these evil ways should be early discontinued.

"The body of those who die of atrophy," continnes the same physician, "present inflammatory obstructions, suppurations, and different kinds of effusions. Symptoms of suppuration in the brain have sometimes been discovered, and its appendix, the fair, (which is one portion of that membrane of the brain which is called the dura mater) is ossified. The lungs are often rotten, adherent to the ribs, and to that membrane which separates them in the middle of the chest. There has been also found effusions of blood within the bronchia (or the cartilaginous tube, which conveys the air to the lungs) and the heart itself full of lymphatic concretions. In this latter organ suppuration has been found to have commenced, and strong concretions towards the orifice of its cavities, while its valves are ossified. The stomach is frequently inflamed, filled with blood, ulcerated and gangrenous; the liver obstructed and rotten, besides many alterations—

such as effusions, dilations of the arteries, and other tumours in the belly."

"How many young persons," exclaims a venerable physician, Portal, in a work entitled, 'Observations on Pulmonary Consumption,' "have been the victims of their unhappy passions. Medical men every day meet with those who by this means are rendered idiotic, or so enervated both in mind and body, that they drag out a miserable existence others perish with marasmus, and too many die of a real pulmonary consumption."

And in another work, upon a very terrible malady—rickets—speaking of a particular form of the disease, says, that young persons who yield themselves up to the seduction of solitary pleasures are often the subjects of the disease, and he cites several examples—

"I have seen," he continues, "four or five of these unfortunate creatures who are so bent, about the age of fourteen or sixteen, that the back was perfectly convex, and the belly appeared to be completely drawn into the chest. The extremities of the long bones, particularly those which form the elbows and the knees, were swelled to an extraordinary degree, the legs were thrown out, their muscles were scarcely developed, their eyes were hollowed, their faces pale and blanched, and their voices harsh and shrill. If one had been asked to have named their age, by their bodily development, the reply would possibly have been, about twelve years. They were extremely weak, as well in body as in mind, and became idiotic a long while before death."

Some pages further on the same author reports the case of a young female of seventeen years of age, who died rather suddenly of the malady of which the above is a description, and of pulmonary

consumption, brought on by an indulgence in solitary habits. These are his words.

"I saw a young girl of seventeen, of puny stature, but who in the space of a year had grown considerably, become so rapidly curved, that in less than six months she was quite hump-backed. The chest was thrust in at the base of the breast-bone. There was a complete hollow at the region of the stomach, while the belly protruded."

You have, my young friend, seen in my preceding letter, that the ancient physicians had already observed and recorded this curvature of the body. The young girl, of whom mention has been above made, had abandoned herself most horribly to secret habits. Effusions of blood supervened, and she perished of pulmonary consumption.

A very justly celebrated physician of Lyons, who gave himself up for many years to deeds of benevolence and humanity, the sensible author of a work entitled "Medicine of the Heart," Mark Anthony Petit, seeing the number of maladies which the indulgence of solitary habits produced, thought it was necessary to erect a monument to one of the victims of this vice, not only to avert its danger, but to attest its power in the production of pulmonary consumption.

"Let it be known," says he, in the preface of his little work, "that pulmonary consumption whose horrible ravages in Europe ought to give the alarm to all governments, has drawn from this very source its fatal activity." And then in the most eloquent verses he speaks of the last moments of an unfortunate victim, whom he himself witnessed, and whom the tomb of Mont Cindre had closed upon, while yet in the very spring of life. This example is one which has occurred in our times, and the tomb is placed on one of the fer-

tile mountains which border the Saone, on the north west in approaching Lyons, and the unfortunate victim who has there found her last resting place, is not yet, in all probability, become part of that dust which has received her. Her miserable error had doubtless been of too long duration; the blow her constitution had received was too deep.

The Baron Boyer, in his "Treatise on Surgical Diseases," believed that this constitutional injury may even be prolonged to old age, when this kind of abuse allows its victim to attain it; and that is a secondary cause of many of those cases of dry gangrene, which are observed at that period of life

---

LETTER IV.

The numberless remarks that I have just brought before you are so affecting, that I have experienced no inconsiderable pain in relating them to you. How fearful would it have been, had the evils which they speak of fallen on you; how little would they have been deserved, since they would have been to you a matter of complete surprise. You have, happily, as yet, nothing to fear—nevertheless, since it is possible that you may become their victim, will you not cease from the cause? Continue to give me your attention; the counsel I give you will not always be so disagreeable as it has hitherto been. I promise you that our path shall be strewed with roses. But I could not avoid, before that I mingled with my sad lessons some pleasant pictures—making you traverse this gloomy

way. Let us hasten from it—let us finish my lengthy enunciation.

These solitary habits, in many females, produce a swelling of the neck, from the force and frequency of those convulsions which so often follow the repetition of this imprudent act, as well as by the arrest of blood, which it occasions in the principal vessels of the neck, in the same way as is observed in epileptic patients. The complexion assumes a yellow tint in some, while others find their skin become covered with scurf.

Professor Richard reports in his "Chirurgical Nosography," a very remarkable example of the power of this cause in the production of eruptions. A lady had, at the same time this pernicious habit, and an eruption of blotches. She was advised to discontinue the practice. She did so, and the eruption disappeared. She again took up with the habit, the eruption again made its appearance. Her reason again taught her the error of her ways, and she once more conquered the penchant, and she was never again troubled with those blotches which had so disfigured her. Some persons are troubled with cramp in the stomach and pains in the back. A physician of my acquaintance has known this cause produce such intense pain in the region of the loins and kidneys of a young girl, that she invariably screamed most alarmingly, and was unable, for some considerable time, to restore herself or the muscles of those parts to quiet. Others suffer from pains in the upper part of the nose, in the summit and back part of the head, in the groins as well as in all the limbs, leucorrhœa or whites, acrid and irritating discharges of different kinds, fluxes, hœmorrhage of the womb, while some are afflicted for the remainder of their life by relaxation and fall of this organ, pains in the bones, which shoot to as

well as in the surrounding viscera, at first vague and undefined, then fixed, sometimes dull, at other times excruciating, are in others but the signs of scherrus or cancer of the womb itself. The belly becomes enlarged, hard, and distended; the eyes are surrounded with a leaden-hued circle; the enamel of the teeth assumes a greyish white color, and no longer presents that exquisite polish nor that ivory tint which has caused them to be compared in the language of poets, to pearls encased in roses.

A number of painful ulcers are sometimes found on the surface of the tongue and the interior of the mouth. The same physician who communicated to me the foregoing observation, has also related to me another fact he has noticed. A lady had abandoned herself to all the intoxication of solitary enjoyment. When she gave way to these excesses, her mouth was filled with ulcers of the most distressing kind;—when she ceased from her imprudent acts, these ulcers altogether disappeared. The flesh loses its solidity, becomes flaccid. Paleness, wasting, wrinkles, inaptitude for all kind of work or exercise, take the place of the freshness, the roundness, the grace and activity of the body; the bosom, which by its exquisitely developed beauty shows that the age of puberty and love has arrived—the bosom, whose fulness in the young mother shows that it encloses an abundance of that nourishment so necessary to the tender state of man's infancy, in those who yield to this habit exhibits nothing but the meagre outline of what it should be, and cries aloud the truth—speaks of nothing but eternity.

Lastly, to sum up as briefly as possible—if such persons enjoy health, they must lose it; if they are attacked with illness, their restoration to health is

difficult; if they are fortunate to recover, they are ever liable to be again assailed. Proper habits are no less necessary for a perfect restoration to health than proper aliments, sleep, moderate exercise, pure air.

And, in conclusion of this letter, I will mention a striking example of the effect of these pernicious secret habits—that is to say, of the relapses they will cause, while the cure appears most certain.

Doctor Valentin, of Marseilles, was attending a lady of title for an intermittent fever, which, though several times cured, always returned under a regular intermittent form preceded by extremely long-continued shivers. The physician several times expressed his astonishment at the disease, and ultimately received from his patient an avowal that she indulged in this pernicious habit, although she was both a wife and mother; and, with the aid of a lady whom he placed near the bedside of the invalid, he succeeded in saving her from the precipice down which she would have hurled herself.

LETTER V.

PINDAR, the celebrated ancient lyric poet, has defined life to be the dream of a shadow; others have described it as a species of flight; while others, more alive perhaps to the miseries than to the pleasures which accompany it, have feigned, that the gods did not make man a present of life, but that they rather sold it to him.

Our life may be truly said to be the dream of a shadow; but this shadow has feeling,—is endowed

with understanding, and by acting wisely, the dream may be rendered a long and happy one.

That our existence is fugitive, the rapid succession of years, the flight from infancy to youth, from youth to old age, and from old age to the dust that follows it, abundantly testify. But we are in possession of a means of giving to this varying existence, which has so manifest a tendency to its own destruction, a more fixed character; and that is, by moderation,--the source of all virtue, and of all happiness.

The author of our being, in granting us life, appears indeed to have surrounded it with numerous duties; but duties are not burdensome, when those, by whom they are imposed, furnish their tributaries, at the same time, an inexhaustible treasure, by which they may be freed from them: with this treasure, we are well acquainted, it is deposited within us; we are allowed free access to it, and indeed are enjoined to draw from it: and if mankind would only make use of it, if they would boldly render themselves subservient to their reason, they would soon discover, that nature was really desirous that they should be happy.

It must nevertheless be admitted, that if Heaven has granted to man the splendid gift of reason, it has, at the same time, rendered it very necessary for him. No other animated being is subject to such numerous diseases, none die from such a variety of causes, and none bear within them so many germs of evil, as himself, if he knows not how to use those means which have been bestowed upon him, for preserving himself from them.

But if we may look upon life as the dream of a shadow, if it be no more than a fugitive existence, if we may, in some degree, say, not that the Supreme Being has sold life to us, for that would be

impious, if taken literally, but it would still seem that it may be so said of those, and that it has been dearly sold, too, who have given themselves up as victims of a solitary vice.

Independently of the disposition, of which I have spoken, of the human species towards so many different affections, each individual has a peculiar tendency to one or more kinds of destruction, by the unequal division of strength, whereby the organs of which they are formed, are endowed. And the truth of this is daily attested in our intercourse with the world; when we hear that such or such a one, has a weak stomach, or delicate chest, &c. And as the weakest organs are the first to suffer from the influence of the causes of disease, and as there can be none more powerful than evil practices, it may be safely predicted of all persons yielding to the delirium of solitary vice, the kind of malady their imprudence will bring upon them.* In vain it will be believed, that we do not bear within ourselves the "*beau ideal*" of human organization. And even though so extreme a favor might have been granted to some individuals, it nevertheless cannot be contended that such a perfect organization is unalterable. Even Thetis herself could not render Achilles invulnerable throughout the whole of his body.

Women approximating very closely by their constitution to that of children, who are eminently lymphatic, nervous, and subject to rickets, experience

* Bickat, in his general anatomy, advances a similar opinion, and which has now for a long time been established. "Life," he says, "is a great exercise, which keeps, by desires the various organs in motion, and which leads at length to their repose: this repose is death. But each organ arrives there more or less soon, according to the desire of strength with which it is invested, proportioned to the greater or less disposition to exhaust it, in the course of this great exercise.

also from an indulgence in this solitary delirium, a variety of nervous disorders, and ricketty affections Permit me to furnish you with some examples of what I have here advanced.

Persons who are devoted to secret vicious habits, whether they be characterized by the delicacy, or the too great activity of their nerves, may rest assured that they will become epileptic, subject to fits, to palpitations, and all other nervous affections.

A little girl, only eight years old, became alarmingly thin; her lower limbs, such as her thighs, legs and feet, were shaken by extraordinary motions, which speedily extended to her higher members—the impossibility of preventing them was absolute; the agitation of the muscles of the face and eyes was excessive. The child could not be in her bed, and they were obliged to keep her continually in an arm-chair, with a fastening before it. The medical man who attended her, thought that the St. Vitus's dance (the name by which this disorder was distinguished) might possibly be attributed to the green sickness, and administered, without success, all the known remedies to remove it. Doctor Morelot having been consulted in this stage, (says Petir, who had it from his friend, the doctor himself) fancied that he recognized the results of a secret habit, and was soon convinced that he was right. Some sound advice, and the constant watching over her by her parents, together with the application of cold baths, musk, and camphor, completely effected a cure.

But at eleven years of age, this same young girl, having again fallen into similar practices, her disorder recurred with still greater intensity; and only, with great difficulty yielded to the same restoratives which had been successful on the former occasion.

Two years after this young lady died of a slow chronic inflammation on the pericardium (the membranous covering of the heart), and which had endured so prodigious an enlargement of the liver, that it occupied nearly the whole of the abdominal cavity, (the lower belly).

I might confine myself to this fact, in reference to those nervous affections considered in that point of view to which I would here draw attention; but as such disorders are those from which women are most likely to suffer, I cannot refrain from adding to the previous example the two following cases, too remarkable to be omitted. They will abundantly prove the extreme nervous susceptibility of which I have spoken, with regard to women; and analyze, moreover, the degree to which this tendency to nervous diseases may be carried among them by secret vicious habits, or solitary evil practices.

The first of these two cases was reported by professor Alibert, at the Hospital Saint Louis, at Paris. I, myself, witnessed the second.

After having described the state of idiotcy of a young country girl, a prey to solitary delirium of the most deplorable excess, at her own home, the professor whom I have named goes on to say—"Her upper extremities—arms, hands, head, and chest, exhibited a condition of leanness worthy of comparison; while her hips, stomach, thighs, and legs, were of so fleshy an appearance, as to astonish the spectator. One might have said, that life had withdrawn itself and resided but in one spot, particularly in the uterus, where all the impressions she experienced were retained; so much so, that, after touching all parts of her body successively, her whole frame became violently agitated, and she would fall into convulsions, in the same man

ner as the works of a clock are set in motion. These convulsions lasted about half an hour; and the patient, during this period, uttered the most fearful groans."

The sufferer whom I attended was affected with similar convulsions, arising from the same cause accompanied by various sensibilities of her hearing. She was about forty years of age; the slightest noise, or words spoken in an ordinary tone of voice, were, a long time before her death, so sensitive had her nerves become, like the noisy shouts of one hallooing at the top of the voice. And at a later period, if she were touched in the gentlest manner, even by the tip of the finger, in any part of the body, she would utter low and agonized moanings, without the power of speaking, or even articulating, and her whole frame would shake, and vibrate, as one may say, for a longer or shorter period, in the same manner as the sting of a bee or wasp, which one draws and lets go suddenly. The unfortunate creature lived about eight days in this state.

Should you at any time observe a woman, who has not been irreproachable in such secret practices, of an apathetic character, weak and languid appearance, and pale complexion, you may be assured that she will become idiotic. And the two following are examples of the same, which prove it, in a trifling manner, by their very dissimilar appearances. Two sisters had exposed themselves to the reproaches I have adverted to—one was of the appearance and character which I have described. She was not affected, for a number of years, by any other mark, than violet-colored tubercles, with which the skin of some part of her body was constantly covered. But neither the period of puberty, nor a more advanced age, nor society, could ever

give any freedom to her intellectual faculties, and the moral state of her whole life was one of half-idiotcy. The other sister, on the contrary, was endowed with a very lively disposition, and was of an affable and agreeable character; but she, at the same time, was afflicted by the rickets, in a very strong degree. She preserved all her liveliness, and indeed all her moral character, notwithstanding the propensity to which she had so unlimitedly surrendered herself; but, after some time, one of the bones of her womb, already out of order, became carious, which would infallibly very soon have caused death, if the advice and care of a very able physician had not arrested its progress.

As an uninterrupted lecture of what I propopse to submit to your reason, touching many other disorders which are entailed on those of such vitiated solitary habits, would undoubtedly fatigue, I shall make what I have to acquaint you with on the subject of those other disorders the matter of other letters

---

LETTER VI.

I SHALL begin this letter by an example of the danger to which persons, who may be indisposed to any kind of pulmonary consumption, expose themselves, by being unmindful of wisdom, in secret.

In the year 1813, I was consulted by Mrs M——. She was at that precise age when every thing is to be apprehended from affections of the chest. She was evidently of a scrofulous habit, and many members of her family had already been

sufferers from the disorders incident to that kind of constitution. Her youth nad been passed in a cold, damp, dull, wooded country, surrounded by mountains difficult of approach, &c. &c. But notwithstanding all these unfavorable circumstances, the person in question had, nevertheless, enjoyed a tolerably good state of health, according to all appearance, till she had attained her eighteenth year. At this period she had a fall, whereby one of her legs was much bruised and swollen; some little time after which, the limb became painful and inflamed, and an abscess gathered in it, which for some years continued to discharge a quantity of purulent matter, notwithstanding the application of all the ordinary remedies in such cases. The ulcers, at last, however, whether from the effect of age, or yielding to the remedies, dried up and healed, the edges of the wounds cicatrized, and the leg, although very thin, appeared to be free from all disease, if we except its weakness and deformity, which were accompanied by lameness.

From this time, that is to say, from her twenty-first to her twenty-fourth year, the girl appeared, externally, to have recovered a perfect state of health; her disposition was lively, and very high spirits. But, at this period, she contracted the self-wounding propensity of solitary vice. She very speedily suffered from oppression of the chest and cough; and, although fully aware that the course she was imprudently pursuing was as dangerous as it was wicked, she continued to persevere in it, and her chest became decidedly affected. She consulted a number of medical men, but without either confessing her fatal pursuits, or discontinuing them. The obstruction, irritation, and weakness of the lungs, increased, she could no longer get any sleep, a hectic fever took possession of her, and her

complexion partook of colors that were quite unnatural; she expectorated large quantities of purulent, congealed matter, of a greyish color, of that species of secretion, attaching to a scrofulous pulmonary consumption.*

She at last confessed to me,—shall I call it her error? No, the term is not strong enough, because she was fully conscious that she was hastening herself to the grave. She rather made a full avowal of the guilty practices in which she was living. In order to divert her from them, I urged every possible argument either of a touching or persuasive character. I saw her again, and questioned her repeatedly, but I found it equally impossible to conquer either her disease or her propensity She became daily more and more enfeebled, from one cause or the other. She was incapable of uttering two words, or of moving a step without being nearly suffocated. Her eyes sparkled from the fever, and she was not the less remarkable for the striking power of her intellect, the last forerunner of approaching death,† just as though her soul was in haste to enable her to lay out to the best advantage the few moments that remained to her, for the exercise of the brightest faculties of her mind. She died, at last, in her twenty-eight year, of a consumption of three years duration, deceived in the hope of her recovery, which hope was rendered every day more and more vain, on account of the obstinacy with which she criminall persevered in her frightful vice.‡

* Described in Greek, by Hippocrates, by the word φυμς.

† This feature has been observed both by the ancient and modern physicians

‡ Doctor Cart, of M., has also remarked, that the influences of solitary vicious habits have frequently had a very great effect in the development of scrofulous diseases. "The white swellings which

A great many persons are of opinion that pulmonary consumption is hereditary:—in numerous cases it is unquestionably so, and more perhaps think that it is infectious; and this opinion is almost as well founded as the previous one. But

appear in various parts of the body," writes this excellent physician, in May, 1817, "and filled with a white transparent humor, enclosed in a membraneous bag, formed from the muscular tunicles, are very common in our days, and we cannot doubt that this disorder, which is a species of scrofula, owes its increase to the misfortunes that are inseparable from war and its attendant privations. But what ravages has it not made among persons who have destroyed their constitution by the deadly incentives of a vicious solitude? The hospitals teem with subjects worn out by the suppuration of these tumors, who owe their frighful fate to this habitual vice. The degeneracy of morals, the absence of principle, and the contagion of example, united with unavoidable privations, have multiplied the forms of scrofulous swellings, which heretofore were very rare, and of which the cure is attended with the greater difficulty, in proportion as those combining causes continue."

This letter contains many important truths, and they are expressed in the tone of a friend, both to humanity and morals. But I really am of opinion, that, instead of attributing the frequency of those white scrofulous swellings, in our days, principally to the degeneracy of morals, it would be more just to limit them to those vicious, solitary habits, which, notwithstanding that other causes may produce them, must still have the greatest influence in giving rise to them. Human nature will be always human nature; and must necessarily be mixed up both with vice and virtue. It is not a very easy matter to the greater or less morality of ages, without a deep and well divided consideration of those that have long since past away. The past is forgotten, the present only strikes us. Was not that vice, of which I am in these letters representing the danger, very common among the Jews, since it so forcibly drew down the attention of their legislator, who felt himself compelled, in order to restrain its progress, to bring home to the imagination of his people the terrible example of Onan? The celebrated Joubert, Chancellor of the University of Montpelier, 150 years ago, complained also, in his treatise of popular errors, of the calamities that this very vice entailed on its votaries of both sexes. And finally was it not, in this present nineteenth century, that the generous physician of Lausanne, composed and published his well known Dissertation. The vicious solitary habits are still then beyond a doubt, unhappily too common. But who can say that they were less so in by-gone times? But however that may be, there is no abatement in their effect. For if we except poisons, and some few frightful maladies, the human system has no greater causes of destruction to dread than their sinful secret vices

it is a fact that cannot be too well established, that no existing cause so rapidly develops these diseases, as the propensity to solitary delirium, however remote the predisposition to these affections may be; and I am fully persuaded, that that has often been attributed either to hereditary disease or to contagion, which has had its origin solely in an adherence to this practice: and that many children born of delicate parents, and who have ever been delicate themselves, have had their chests and constitutions strengthened, by their mere continuance in a chaste and innocent course of life although, in their infancy, they may have been regarded as consumptive; which, in reality, they were not. Is it then to be wondered at, that so many persons die of consumption, attributing their death to delicacy of their constitutions, if they waste, as soon as they have the power, the little strength that nature has bestowed upon them.

According to one of the most observing physicians that ever existed (Sydenham), the organs of respiration are the weakest of all those belonging to the human race; two thirds of mankind die of diseases of the lungs; and the most common period in which young persons resort to these vicious habits, is precisely that wherein the chest exhibits the greatest susceptibility. There is, moreover, a species of consumption to which women are greatly exposed by the very nature of their constitution; such as tuberculose and lymphatic consumptions.

That particular manner of oppcsite living, that is, by leading a chaste life, is, on the other hand, so favorable to the system, that I have seen persons of an extremely weak and languid constitution, not only uninjured in the chest, but who have, by time and care, acquired a strength of body that surprised

me when I have met them, after having lost sight of them for a great or less period. I knew one in particular, who had always been considered decidedly consumptive, but, from a regular manner of living during her langour and debility, and by happily guiding her judgment by the admonition of her wisdom, became subsequently so hearty and strong, as to be enabled sometimes to walk fourteen miles a day.

Ah! if pale and sickly children could only be preserved in their early innocence, if those whose parents have fallen victims to pulmonary complaints could only be kept chaste, if persons who are subject to consumption would only lead a life of purity, we should soon discover that such disorders of the chest are neither so hereditary nor infectious as they are supposed to be.

Every animated thing,—the plant, the brute, the human species, are born delicate and fragile, and grow up in strength; the tender shoot of the oak becomes a hardy tree; the weakest infant, a soldier, a laborer, a vigorous man, if nothing be done to prevent it. If nature sleeps, languishes, or is deceived, it knows when to awaken and retrieve each error, if it be not incessantly thwarted or crushed, no matter by what means. The author of nature has traced out its steps, has dictated its laws, and a premature death, the melancholy consequence of evil vices, is only one of the rules of his immortal code.

How much it were to be desired, that persons would not so frequently despise themselves in the world, and that they would not invariably, falsely, attribute to family diseases, or the contagious nature of consumptions, that which is traceable alone to vicious habits.

The person of whom I was speaking to you, who, for a long time was looked upon, as one not to enjoy life for any lengthened period, but as specially destined, by the untoward appearances of her chest, very speedily to be called upon to pay the great debt of nature, has frequently attended people afflicted with complaints of the chest, has held, within hers, their arms and hands, damp with the perspiration of their protracted agonies; and has now, at the age of thirty-five years, not a single wish to form with respect to her health. And do we not frequently see young persons, equally interesting by their devotion and their youth, performing these generous attentions in the hospitals, and preserving better health, and finer complexions than many moving about in the world? I assure you, that I have seen them in these affecting retreats of charity, so fresh and healthy, that their modest demeanor, and neat white dresses, might easily lead you to mistake them for real angels of salvation in the midst of the sick.

But sometimes persons born of healthy parents, of sound constitutions, and who themselves are quite robust, and always breathing a fine air, find the chest affected by their evil habits, and the grave opening before them, long before their time; while, on the other hand, they on whom Heaven seems only to have bestowed a very short life, are preserved, by a purity of conduct, to the limits of extreme old age.

The spring and autumn, especially, impose on those whose chests are delicate, or have a tendency to those affections, the greatest necessity for irreproachable morals; for they are the two seasons principally fatal to consumptive people.

LETTER VII.

If good air and nourishment are as essential to persons subject to any description of consumptive complaints as chastity, the same may be said of those who are subject to scrofula or rickets.

When scrofulous symptoms are found in persons addicted to this solitary weakness, that terrible disorder never fails to spread rapidly in such cases. If disposed to attack the neck more than any other part independently of some other signs, it will exhibit first, in those parts of it least provided with glands, small tumors yielding to the touch but without color, and causing no pain; these tumors will increase in size, become soft, tender, more or less red, and then assume a violet tinge; in time, they will fester and turn to so many scrofulous ulcers, more or less considerable, difficult to cure, easily returning, and even when fortunately healed, leaving unsightly scars. Should this disease thus develop itself in those organs which constitute the joints, rottenness and exostosis (swelling of the bones) consecutive luxations (slow and successive displacing of the extremity of the bones and their cavities,) together with lameness, and often loss of limbs, by amputation, become the consequences.

A pulmonary phthysic, such as I have described in the preceding letter, the swelling of the glands in the lower part of the stomach—the part most immediately connected with the digestive system, may also be the result of a scrofulous habit operating on the chest and stomach, already irritated and exhausted by dangerous and immoral practices.

These numerous affections are not the only ones such a temperament engenders when brought to the

last stage of vitiation by such irregularities. A crowd of other evils will arise from the same source, (such as wandering pains, ophthalma, or inflammation of the eyes) of the same nature, that is to say essentially scrofulous.

The patient will also be subject to many infirmities in youth, in age, when residing in valleys, or damp places situated to the north or west.

A soft white skin, blue eyes, ruddy complexion, together with a lively turn of mind, are generally found to be the personal qualities which announce a scrofulous habit.

The constitution of women, as I have already observed, is essentially lymphatic, and renders them peculiarly liable to this disease. Tuberculous phthysic is more frequently met with in the female than in the other sex.

With respect to rickets, if the bones have a tendency to become soft, they soon bend. If this change takes place in the bones of the chest, it curves, becomes arched beyond proportion, and deformed before, behind, and at the side. If it takes place in the bones of the leg, haunches, thighs, arms, the parts or the members whose good condition they so powerfully influence in a healthy state, become deformed and weak to a degree more or less inconvenient and disgusting in proportion to the deterioration of the bone. I have quoted for you five examples of such a change in the whole skeleton, observed by Professor Portal, as the consequence of dangerous habits, and inserted in his "Traite sur la rachitisme, ou la Noueure des enfans."

Doctor Richard, also quoted by Retih, once saw a similar deformity of the ribs, in an extreme degree, arising from the same cause.

I was once consulted by a woman who had be

Digitized by Google
Original from THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

one deformed, that is to say, had completed the process that rendered her so in a moment, while carrying a bucket of water; her appearance excited strong suspicions respecting her morals. But if this accident was not in her case the result of immoral habits, how much such propensities would have facilitated it!

Two of the most eminent surgeons of our day, professors Labaher and Boyer, place this imprudence in the first rank among the causes of rottenness and bending of the bones, and give some authentic instances of it in their valuable treatises on surgery.

More quotations on this description of malady would be superfluous. I shall close this letter with two remarks.

First, rickets, like pulmonary phthysic, has more often, probably been considered as the fatal gift of parents to their children than it really is, and its sure cause, the habit which brought it on, has often been passed over.

Secondly; all gibbosities are not however to be attributed to vicious habits. They may be occasioned in early infancy by a bad curse, taken in later life, by bad nourishment, and unwholesome dwelling, want of exercise, and hereditary disposition for the gout, rheumatism, or other diseases; by eruptive fevers, falls on the back, and other causes, and all that may generally weaken and oppose the natural and regular growth of the body.

Far then from asserting that persons thus afflicted are to be despised or blamed, I think on the contrary, that with some it is more the result of an unhappy destiny than merited; and that every motive of benevolence urges to pity and relieve their condition.

The blame we may feel disposed to attach to some persons for their bad conformation, can only be addressed with justice, to those whose childhood and youth have not always been free from reproach.

It it easy to distinguish between those whom we ought only to pity, and those whom we ought at the same time to blame.

The former, have the head large relatively to the rest of the body, and the arms long,and as it were drawn out. The latter do not show these peculiarities.

The first are usually gay, lively; while the second, on the contrary, combine with their deformity extreme stupidity and inertness. All functions, except respiration, are well discharged by the former, with the others all are accomplished badly and anguidly.

These appear always to be laboring under a severe malady, and are incapable of any toil; while those are wholly free from this appearance, and daily engage in occupations more or less difficult—in study, in the cultivation of science and the practice of the arts

---

LETTER VIII.

You have just seen, my interesting patient, that persons merely liable to convulsions, pulmonary phthysic, and rickets, have by indulgence in solitary vice brought on these disorders themselves. You

have seen the simple dispositions for painful diseases become the cause of the most distressing consequences, when they might have remained without such results, and even been repaired by time, had not the unfortunate victims stood in the way of their cure.

The following is the invariable fate of persons whose stomachs are naturally weak, ropy, cold, or irritable. That organ becomes the seat of much pain, accompanied by vomiting; and digestion is effected with more and more difficulty. The food they take is not reduced with sufficient speed, or in a proper manner, to a state of assimilation; it neither restores nor nourishes them; and does not invigorate their power. They grow thin daily, though generally eating heartily. A slow fever, arising chiefly from the disordered state of this part of the body, seizes them, and they die of exhaustion.

A young person was frequently afflicted with pains in the stomach. She had quite lost her appetite and become extremely melancholy (a state rendering the patient very liable to pains in the stomach), and Doctor Federigo describes her as endeavoring to persuade him that purgatives were the only remedies suited to her condition. This physician having questioned her respecting her mode of life, she tried to avoid exciting his suspicions that pernicious habits might be the cause of her inconvenience. But the pains in the stomach increasing, she confessed, with much reluctance, that she had for some time been the victim of a secret passion, which she dared not divulge. Strengthening medicines and the care she took to conquer her weakness cured her perfectly.

If the emperament of such a woman is weak, if

any members of her family, of her own sex, have at any time been afflicted with a white discharge, the imprudent and unhappy victim of solitary habits, hoping it will extenuate her own case in similar circumstances, privately violate the laws of chastity.

In the treatise on the dangers of this vice by the physician of Lausanne, we meet with the following extract from a letter of Professor Stehlin, a physician at Bale in Switzerland: "I also know a young lady, about twelve or thirteen years of age, who has brought on consumption by this detestable habit. Her stomach is large and dilated, and she is affected with a discharge and inability to retain her urine. Remedies have relieved her partially, but she is still languishing, and I fear the consequences."

Doctor Federigo, whom I have already quoted, relates the subjoined case in the same work. "I have," he says, "known for several years a woman subject to great debility and loss of appetite. A slow nightly fever had reduced her to a state of extreme thinness; her eyes were pale and sunken; she suffered from a burning skin, and could scarcely stand: an abundunt discharge increased her weakness, which had attained an advanced stage of *marasmus*. The most active remedies, such as decoctions of quiquma, taken in milk, and the waters of Recovara, were useless. She died in a deplorable state of consumption. In vain I questioned her respecting her past life, in the hope of ascertaining the cause of her malady, I could not succeed. Only a month before her death she confessed, with tears in her eyes, that she had contributed to her own ruin, by giving herself up con-

stantly, for several years, to a secret and destructive weakness."

I was consulted, not long since, by a person rapidly approaching the same state, through the same fault. She will furnish here a third example of chloride, or sallow complexion and the white discharge, and will, by and by, if she continue the fatal practice, be an instance of dorsal and mucous consumption.

She told me, that nearly all her family were subject to white discharges. She lived a very indolent life, was about thirty-three years of age, decidedly lymphatic, and tall and thin. The color of her face might be well compared to a piece of white satin, slightly discolored. Her deportment was wholly destitute of grace and firmness, and she had constantly a white discharge.

I told her, with all possible precaution, what I conceived to be the true cause of this discharge. She protested it was not the case; but afterwards informed me, indirectly, that she was addicted to this wretched habit.

LETTER IX.

But what will become of a young person's beauty when the health is thus deeply impaired? It can only bloom and disappear like the withered form and faded color of a flower nipped in the bud; or

to make use of another comparison, like the ruins of a temple destroyed by profane hands, it loses the elegance and majesty which delighted the imagination and inspired respect, long before years and decay would have impaired those qualities.

The young woman, or girl, is this temple, and must expect to lose all the attributes of beauty when once she gives herself up to this most destructive of all passions. The growth of the body, the development of the figure, all grace and freshness, will disappear; for this error spares no charms.

No doubt, the words of the celebrated physician I have already cited occur to your mind. Respecting a votary to this solitary vice he observed—"She is a tree withered while blossoming; a perfect walking skeleton."

What a different picture those young females present who display so agreeably all the charms of their sex!

Consider a girl at the age when the attractions of youth succeed the grace of infancy. Happy is the maiden who preserves her primitive purity, when, like an unknown lake in the bosom of a lovely country, her imagination as yet has only reflected the heaven above and the verdure and the flowers around. She appears to unite in her person the rarest charms of the universe.

How noble an aspect those women presented who furnished Virgil with the following portraits! In the first, he describes Venus appearing to Æneas in the second, Dido starting for the chase:

A ces mots
Elle quitte son fils; mais aux yeaux [illegible] heros
Elle offre en detournant sa tete eblouissante,
D'un cou seme de lis, la beaute ravissant
De ses cheveux divins les parfums precieux
Semblent en s'exhalant retourner vers les cieux

Sa robe en plis flottans jusqu'a ses pieds s'abaisse;
Elle marche, et son port revele une deesse.

Didon enfin parait: d'un air majesteux
Elle fend de sa cour les flots respectueux.
Eneide, liv. I.—DELILLE'S translation.

If man be lord of the creation, such a woman is surely the queen. But this grace and this fresh and fair complexion are never to be met with in persons consumed by disease; and these portraits, presented to us under the names of goddesses, are those of persons who have really existed. In the same way Racine described the interesting Lavallière, in his Berenice. Thus Fontaine, when he covered with roses and lilies the Venus whom Homer, three thousand years before, had begirt with the enchanting zone, was no doubt thinking of the young and virtuous La Sabliere. And probably Virgil was indebted to some princess of the court of Augustus for the majestic air which excites our admiration in his Dido.

In this letter it was my intention only to point out the charms health imparts to women, and I perceive that the examples I have chosen furnish instances of moral as well as physical beauty. Is not the one, then, inseparable from the other? Can health and grace exist without innocence and modesty? Chastity is the daughter of Modesty, and therefore health cannot be long enjoyed without Chastity.

Socrates said long ago that a handsome body gave promise of a noble soul; and the painter, Des Jardins, author of the "Three Reigns," has said—

"Ah! qui peut separer la pudeur de la grace?
Son silence nous plait, so froideur meme enflamme,
Et la pudeur enfin est la grace de l'ame."

Virtue adorns women with every grace. It gives them not only the beauty that attends health, but bestows on them still more powerful attractions, that is, the expression of every amiable sentiment. The power of fascinating, so often ascribed to them, is no fiction; and a modern poet has very aptly said, while speaking of the Author of Nature, in the praise he is bestowing on your sex—

"Pour son dernier ouvrage il crea la beaute,
L'on sent qu'a ce chef d'œuvre il dut s'etre arrete."

What, in fact, could he create more charming than the being destined to reign over the heart of man himself.

LETTER X.

We owe to your sex the admission, that in all age of the world there have been a number of excellent women. They had acquired so high a degree of esteem among our ancestors, the Gauls and Germans, that they regarded them as divine. With the former, there was no excuse for failing in respect toward them; the Gauls were allowed to say anything at their feasts except to speak ill of women.

No doubt, this was a personal homage they paid to worthy partners; but it was also assuredly rendered to modesty and chastity, as virtues.

Doubtless, they also considered modesty the grace of the soul, and would not have it attacked even in common conversation.

Have women lost this almost divine influence which, according to all historians, they enjoyed among the Gauls? No; those who combine chastity and modesty with beauty, still retain it; and this kind of empire will ever be the natural heritage of such women.

I have often heard a person observe—a person who knew how to esteem these qualities,—that he never felt more confidence in the divinity, or more certainty respecting the immortality of the soul, than when in the society of a lovely and virtuous woman. I have often met with this sentiment in more than one writer.

Some ancient philosophers, and even the best, have supposed the soul to be a kind of divinity enclosed in our bodies. I will not decide the truth of this opinion, but certainly the sweetest rays of the Divinity are found nowhere so conspicuously as on the brow of a woman worthy the esteem and confidence of her husband.

A celebrated man of the last century observed—"All the gentle and sublime ideas, full, as it were, of the Divinity, assemble at the image we form of a Socrates and a Fenelon." I think we might express ourselves in the same way, if we wished to describe all we experience at the sight of a maiden, bride, or mother, endowed with all the virtues of the age and sex.

But why do I dwell on the praises of modesty? It is indisputable that it cannot be separated from beauty. It is the most affecting of all graces; it is, as a celebrated woman (La Marquise de Lambert) observed to her daughter, a great lustre in a young

person, but it is no more unknown or strange to you than grace. Besides, ought we to praise what is plainly so admirable? "The beautiful (remarks one of the wisest men that ever existed, and he certainly would not have omitted modesty in this maxim) the beautiful of every description is beautiful of itself. It exists in and of itself. Praise forms no part of it. Thus nothing becomes better or worse from the opinions of others." We admit this with respect to all that is beautiful in the productions of nature or art; but is there anything wanting to that which is naturally beautiful? No; no more than to justice, truth, humanity, or modesty; what is there in these qualities that becomes beautiful by praise, or loses its beauty through blame?

Well, these amiable traits, these lovely colors—lovely maidens, in the spring of life and innocence—this elegant and flexible waist, the grace which Nature only bestows on your sex,—these are not the only advantages of the young person who is chaste. Among the means of pleasing so liberally bestowed on women—for it is Nature's design that they should please,—the voice is not the least agreeable and powerful.

If the Supreme Being seems to have imparted the grave tone of command to the voice of man, we cannot doubt that he has given to that of woman the more delicate but not less useful accent, which seduces and disarms; and is not seducing or disarming in effect to command? Is it less commanding because accomplished by pleasure and fascination? Has not the mouth of a virtuous woman also its eloquence? Can there be any eloquence more persuasive than hers, going more directly to the heart, or more rapidly inspiring the most honorable and generous sentiments—courage a[illegible]

It is said that the Israelites experienced a kind of holy delirium when they listened to their women singing their psalms. "They imagined," says M. Segur, "in these pious moments, that the exhilarating influence on the mind was owing to the divine power of their wives."

Sterne, the author of the "Sentimental Journey," says of Eliza, "She spoke, and her voice resembled the sound of a lute."

A learned professor has acknowledged, that he was obliged to forego the pleasure of seeing a celebrated actress perform, to check the violent passion her voice inspired him with.

Such is a portion of the lovely dower which the young female who has yielded to, and has no longer power to resist, the most dangerous of all errors, lose; for the voice of those addicted to solitary habits often becomes harsh, weak, and sometimes is lost. These letters furnish several examples. If it be not entirely lost—if it do not become very feeble—it never fails to lose one of its principal qualities—its clearness; that agreeable sonority which made Sterne compare the voice of his Eliza to that of a lute.

Who shall restore charms thus lost—what shall replace them? Dress? This hope cannot be indulged. The charm of innocence cannot be received twice; there is no adorning for the immoral, vicious woman, were she more lovely than the Greek who, fearing the loss of a suit, unveiled, that her judges might be moved by her beauty.

No, that is ornament which really adorns; and a sage has said, that "It is not gold, jewels, emeralds, precious stones, nor purple robes, that adorn a woman, but that which makes her honest, virtuous, humble and modest."

Ah, if women who forget their duties could see the advantages arising from observing them, they would never determine to make such sacrifices!

Yet they make them; the young devotees of solitary pleasures, without knowing it, are no longer chaste. Innocence has ceased to be their charm, and modesty will soon cease to be their grace

---

LETTER XI.

As you have seen, my dear young patient, that the physician acquainted with the constitution of any one addicted to solitary weaknesses can foresee exactly the maladies they will give rise to, so they can also predict the alteration of feature that will ensue according to the natural countenance of the patient. If the unfortunate victim of sensuality and corruption have an oval face, a well-proportioned brow, eyes full of dignity moving beneath handsome lids, and shaded by long lashes, the curve of the nose gracefully formed, the cheeks full, and a noble and pleasing demeanor,—the temples will become depressed; the cheek-bones prominent; the cheeks hollow; the nose appear longer than it was, from the growing thinness of the surrounding parts; the eyes will get hollow, and assume a livid and languid look; and the face, formerly so beautiful, have the appearance of deformity, suffering, and decrepitude

While I was writing these reflections, a funeral-bell announced to the town that two unfortunate parents were about to render the last duties to a poor girl, who, though scarcely four-and-twenty, made me think during a visit I lately paid her that I beheld a woman worn down by the weight of nearly a century.

She was sinking—bent forward—and, as is often observed, broken down. Her face seemed lengthened and singularly wasted; her large eyes wandered wildly; her cheek-bones were extremely prominent; the extremity of the nose blue and livid as in many old people; two large and deep wrinkles descended from each side of the nose to the chin; the mouth and corners of the lips were drawn downwards, which imparted an appearance of extreme age to this worn countenance; while the half-opened mouth and bewildered eyes gave it a character of stupidity. The slightest movement was attended with a feeling of suffocation; she could only utter a few words in a whisper and at long intervals; all the upper part of her body, her arms, and chest, were terribly thin, and the rest watery and dropsical.

I had only time to pay her a few visits. Every toll of the bell made me groan for the unfortunate creature. I wrote down the history of her disease to her sad dictation.

When other features distinguish a victim of the same error—if her face be round rather than oval, her nose slightly raised at the point instead of being convex, her mouth small, her complexion generally pale, her skin white, the solitary weakness will soon deprive her of the embonpoint and the freshness of health which she possessed while she continued chaste. Fever, which always brightens the

eyes of the consumptive, will singularly enliven hers; in short, it would be difficult to find a face so resembling the usual representations of death. This reflection has often been suggested to me by the aspect of one woman in particular, (among others who were in this state), from whom I trace this portrait.

If their dangerous habit draw its devotees to the grave by means of a pulmonary phthysic, or the cruel pains of a cancerous affection—in the first instance, the sunken cheeks and all the appearance of consumption will combine with the characteristic features of the homicidal passion, and take the place of the natural physiognomy; while, in the second case, the sallow complexion and the air of extreme suffering which accompany cancerous complaints, will conspire to efface the natural expression of the patient, and substitute one peculiar to her case.

It is the same in scrofulous and scorbutic cases, and in organic affections of the heart, as well as in many other diseases. They disfigure the face with all these peculiar deformities, when the errors and constitutions of the patients have produced and developed them.

The particular organic affections I have just mentioned do not declare themselves in the imprudent victim of solitary habits; a certain discoloring thinness and irreparable loss of strength are sometimes the only fruits of their degrading propensity. They often languish a long time, surviving, as it were, *themselves*. What, then, is the existence of persons who have fallen into that state? It resembles the last stage of life, the most decrepid age; for, as soon as a woman has lost her strength, voice, and freshness, *age* has incontestibly arrived

for her, did she only number four-and-twenty years. Such a woman is essentially *old*, since she retains none of the charms of youth.

One of the authors who have described most agreeably the moral and physical qualities of woman, represents her in the following way:— "The eye cannot trace," observes Roussel, "all the phases of a tree, from the moment when the warmth of spring restores it to vegetation until the first severity of winter deprives it of the advantages of the fine weather, and again delivers it over to inertness and death; but it is easy to remark the most striking circumstances of its development. It seizes with pleasure the moment when the buds begin to burst the bark and mingle their green and tender verdure with the brown or greyish color of the branches, that seem as though they were weary of the cold repose wherein nature had for so long a time buried them; there give the first signal of their awakening, and proclaim that the whole is about to revive, and put on a smiling face. Our hearts are enlivened on beholding them, and we feel as if we ourselves had received an increase of life, and participate in the joys that give them birth. And this agreeable impression is prolonged by turning our eyes to the progress which they make insensibly every day, until the moment when the leaves, confounded with the blossoms, strike our senses, begetting a soft ecstacy at the sight of so singular an union of such enchanting beauties. This state of things is dispersed as rapidly as the causes that produced it; the leaves speedily acquire a more decided color, taking a less tender and less touching tint, though still becoming more precious in themselves, and more interesting by the advantages of which they give promise; the blossoms

wither, and are succeeded by the fruit which consoles us for their disappearance. This third epoch opens our minds to new sensations; the liveliness of our first impressions subsides, and is displaced by a satisfaction of a less impetuous but more permanent nature, resembling a peaceful enjoyment. The fruits at length, in their turn, disappear, and the dead void announces that that tree, which but a few months before, had charmed us as much by its sweet odors as by its fecundity, will speedily be nothing more than a sterile trunk. Nevertheless, we are delighted to enjoy that soft shade which it still furnishes, though we cannot help contemplating its approaching decrepitude with a regret that is only softened by the remembrance of the past enjoyments imparted to us.

Such is the type of woman. Although a constant state of change, from her birth to the close of life, it is hardly possible for us to trace it, but at some of the principal epochs of her career, equally remarkable by the various characteristics exhibited by each, as by the different impressions produced on us at such periods.

Nothing is, in fact, more true than this gradual and imperceptible progress of a woman, if one could only follow it from grade to grade, from the moment when we see her burst forth as a tender shoot, until that wherein time should have deprived her of all those graces which made her an ornament of the earth, and she should cease to exist. Her various lustres are no more than so many short solstices: and although, from one day to another, we cannot define any change in her, still she is never stationary, and nothing can be more just than the parallel of the enchanting phases through which she passes, in her gentle progression, with the dif-

ferent phenomena and modes of existence which time and the seasons produce in a tree, from its first budding, its blossoms, its fruits, and its apparently permanent state; its various shades, and successive tints of the leaves, as compared with the shades and tints of a woman, and between their fading, old age, and fall; nothing more exact than the tracing the different feelings one experiences, not only when keeping the eyes constantly fixed on the tree, but viewing it also from interval to interval.

Well, then, suppose this lovely tree henceforth to us undermined by the secret influence of some cause eminently destructive, this series of touching aspects that it offered before, is speedily interrupted, and it now presents nothing beyond a thin and withered foilage; it languishes, becomes barren, and perishes, after having saddened for some time, by its gloomy appearance, that ground which it ought to have embellished.

Such, alas! is the promised existence of the young girl who follows indiscreet habits and practices. Only let her cast her eyes on the first of these pictures, and she will there in some measure, find depicted the unhappy victim who has shortened her days and blighted the noble character she was destined to fill from the very moment she has yielded to solitary enjoyment. Thenceforth there are no longer the tints of the rose and the lily; no longer the beauteous flower; no more seasons, no more solstices, no more imperceptible grades from one stage of delight to another still more delightful; instead of fulfilling the number of years for which Nature destined her, she frequently will only graduate from one state of decay to another, more deciduous than that which preceded it, and from

one fall to a deeper one; for, as everything is continually changing, Nature has willed that there should be no exception in those imperceptible determinations which the victims of solitary vice have exposed themselves to; thus really inviting and anticipating old age, with all its melancholy attributes, which even with care comes quite fast enough, particularly with females. And thus, in fact, the unfortunate victims to this vice do not, and have no right to, participate in the real enjoyments of life; being like that man who was excluded from the royal marriage feast, because he was not clad in a wedding garment; that is to say, in the sense of holy writ, because he was not adorned with the virtues.

LETTER XII.

HITHERTO I have only acquainted you with the fatal consequences of solitary habits from the reports of those celebrated men whose testimony I have set before you; I will now, therefore, subjoin some of the melancholy confessions of the victims themselves, who have been led into these dangerous errors.

Before exhibiting them, however, I would wish to observe, that if unfortunately you should have incurred the dangers to which these letters refer, by a continuance in solitary practices, the only way to get out of them is by quickly showing sufficient

strength of mind and wisdom to tear yourself from the indulgence of a passion that is attended by such dreadful results.

These letters themselves furnish some instances of a cure, though I must at the same time state that they are very few.

A LETTER

FROM A VICTIM TO THE DEPLORABLE FAULT OF SOLITARY HABITS, TO DR. TISSOT, WHOSE ADVICE SHE IS SEEKING.

"I had the misfortune, sir, in my earliest youth, I believe when between eight or ten years of age, to contract a very pernicious habit, that soon undermined my health, which has been particularly bad for some years. I labor under most extraordinary dejection; my nerves are very weak; my hands always in a state of tremor; and I am in a constant perspiration, with violent and frequent pains in the stomach, arms, legs, loins, and chest: with a perpetual cough. My eyes are dull and weak, my appetite ravenous; but yet I continue to get thinner, and always look very ill."

SECOND LETTER.—FROM ANOTHER VICTIM.

When quite young I contracted a frightful

habit that has destroyed my health. I am frequently overwhelmed with confusion, and suffer from such swimming in the head, that I am under the perpetual fear of apoplexy. My chest has become narrowed, and my breathing consequently difficult. I have frequent pains in the stomach, and suffer throughout my whole frame, daily becoming more anxious and enfeebled. My sleep during the night is agitated and disturbed; and I am quite unrefreshed by it. I have constant itchings; am very pale with weak and painful eyes, yellow complexion and bad breath."

THIRD LETTER.

"I cannot walk two hundred steps without resting, so extreme is my weakness. I have continual pains in my body, particularly the shoulders, and suffer greatly from those in the chest. My appetite is good, but this is rather a misfortune, as I have dreadful pains in the stomach after eating. If I read a page or two my eyes fill with tears, and create great suffering; and I am constantly sighing involuntarily."

FOURTH LETTER.

"Had I not been restrained by religion, I should long ere this have terminated a life that has become burdensome to me by my own fault.

"In fact, it would be impossible to conceive a more hopeless state of existence, than that of which I am about to describe the last scene, and the fear of adding one crime to another, was no doubt the

only feeling that restrained the person who was so cruelly punished from closing her mortal career thus early."

It is still the celebrated Doctor Tissot who relates the fact, and I will leave him to speak for himself.

"The disease at first only showed itself in this young woman by slow and daily progress: but, for many months antecedent to her death, she could not stand upon her legs, nor even bear the weight of her arms and hands; the disease of her tongue increased, and she so lost her voice that you could hardly hear her speak. The *extensor* muscles—those that support the head—allowed it constantly to droop on her chest. She was never without a pain in the loins; and appetite and sleep both gradually left her; and for the last months of her life she had the greatest difficulty in swallowing at all. At about Christmas she was overtaken with oppression and intermittent fever, and her eyes sunk in, in a most singular manner. When I saw her, she was supported day and night in an arm chair, with her feet extended on another—though even then her head every moment would fall upon her bosom; and she never was without some one close at hand to change her attitude, raise her head, feed her, give her snuff, and listen attentively to all her requests. The last days of her life she was reduced to speak letter by letter, which were written down as she uttered them."

In order not to fatigue you too much with such afflicting discourse, I have never given you any of the letters from these unhappy patients at full length, but only such extracts as I wished to impress upon you. I will therefore as shortly as possible submit an extract or two from other letters

addressed by the patients themselves to their physicians, and published by Doctor Doussin Dubreuil, who in so doing was guided only by the best feelings.

The first extract is that of a letter written to Doctor Doussin Dubreuil himself, and gives an instance when epilepsy was the result of the error of solitude.

"When about twelve years of age, I was troubled with pains in the head, and the sensation of a weight upon the brain, for which I was bled, and kept on low diet without experiencing much relief, and soon after I was surprised by an attack of epilepsy, to which I then became subject, having had a very severe one recently. Indeed, Sir, I cannot doubt but that it is owing to an evil habit which I contracted when very young, that I am so nervous that I can hardly move, and the smallest object terrifies me, even the threats of a child not more than ten years of age quite unnerves me, and I am unable to apply myself to anything, as the 'least constraint' of mind brings on a fit."

The next extract furnishes an example of repeated nervous attack, with the falling down, and rigidity of the nerves of the patient.

"The following is the description that has been given to me of my fits. I stamp violently on the floor, and then fall, with my limbs stiffened, teeth clenched, and the end of my tongue thrust between the incisive teeth. My face and hands become livid, and no doubt, Sir, my unfortunate fate is the result of those murderous self-indulgences with which I frequently sought to gratify myself, as before that, I enjoyed an excellent state of health, which was evinced by the freshness of my complexion."

The third shows the probability of a diseased

pericardium, the membrane that encloses the heart

"I am very thin, but should nevertheless be in the enjoyment of good health, were it not for sundry pains I feel, one in particular, in the interior of the body, near the left shoulder, which I fear will cause my death, since it is in that part that surrounds the heart."

The fourth extract gives an example of excessive pains:—

"As I mentioned to you before, my morals were entirely pure, and my health seemed to be unalterable, till I was fifteen years of age, and never can I reflect on the happiness I then enjoyed, without feeling the bitterest remorse. Had I but listened to the good counsel of another young girl whom I myself wished to corrupt, and who at once repulsed the propositions I made to her, I should never have fallen into the pitiable state I have been in for the last ten years. When lying full length on my bed or the sofa, the pains I experience in all my limbs makes me scream out in such a manner, as to set the persons about me shuddering, frequently involving the dear relatives who surrounded me in constant alarm, and no doubt my presence is fatiguing to them. I am so thin that you may count all my bones, indeed I have scarcely the appearance of a human being."

The fifth extract shows an affliction of the bowels and stomach:—

"My stomach is always grumbling as if the bowels were detaching themselves from each other. The principal disease is in the stomach, which as I told *you before*, will not digest anything."

And the sixth extract is to the same effect, showing the probable nervous affection of the bowels:—

"At other times there is a numbness, and pains in the stomach, as if my boweis were all tightened up and strongly compressed."

The seventh extract is an example of internal heat and the feeling of insects gnawing:—

"When in my dreams, I become involuntarily guilty, on awaking, I begin to feel an internal disease, imparting the most horrid pains which increased more and more. As besides feeling a dreadful heat which appears to be consuming the spine of my back, my stomach and ribs have the sensation of being gnawed by insects, and justly alarmed at so deplorable a condition, I think it my duty to acquaint my Doctor with it."

And a little further on, in the same letter, she says:—

"My voice is hoarse, and I cough night and day, with a slight fever that is always increased on a repetition of my errors. I have moreover ague fits, and I can neither read, write, or walk, and my memory is entirely gone."

Many other letters have been written to me on the same subject, that is, seeking immediate advice and assistance; amid an immense number that have been written by the same person, I will only show you a few passages from three, the first and the last particularly, written at seven months' intervals, by which the duration, and the degree of resistance, of those diseases which spring from such causes may be seen.

Extract of a letter 2d December, 1816.

"This habit has reduced me to a most frightful condition, I have not the slightest hope of living for another year, and am in constant alarm, as I see death approaching with rapid steps. I trust however to you for any prolongation of life I may

obtain, as may be, the few healthy germs that are still left to me will be revived by your skill, and my zeal in following your advice strictly."

* * * * * * * *

"I have for a long time past been affected with a weakness, that has been constantly increasing When I get up in the morning, I am for a short time exposed to a giddiness, and all the joints of my bones rattle just like the shaking of a skeleton and occasionally on getting out of bed my nose bleeds, and I am seized with a spitting of blood, and this notwithstanding every care and caution; the blood on such occasions being sometimes free and sometimes clotted; and this is followed by such nervous attacks, that I can scarcely move my arms, and then my limbs become as it were numbed, accompanied by pains of the heart; the quantity of blood which I discharge, as I have mentioned, has latterly increased. My limbs are small, and I am neither fat nor tall. I derive but little nourishment from what I take, and frequently feel a sharp pricking pain at the pit of my stomach, and between my shoulders, which creates great difficulty in breathing. For three months past, I have suffered a constant agitation in my limbs which seems to be produced by the circulation of the blood. Going up only a few stairs, or walking the shortest distance is followed by great fatigue, and I am troubled with shivering fits, especially in the morning."

Extract of a further Letter from the same Patient, in the following February:—

"I am now in my twenty-first year, and dread the effects of spring; my skin, however, is not so

parched and heated as heretofore. My arms are very thin, and my veins almost imperceptible, they seem no longer to have any blood in them. Notwithstanding all my care I fear I never shall recover a healthy constitution, or get any flesh upon my bones.

"It appears to me that for some time past I have become bent and stooping, and I suffer from constant perspirations at the back.

"My blood is still strangely agitated, and whether lying down or standing, the circulation of it and my pulse create constant excitement, particularly about my limbs and head, and when I lean down at all, I am immediately troubled with deafness. I have also a slight cough, but I think very little of that."

This young girl deceived herself, that which she mistook for a mere cough, was the commencement of an affection of the chest, and organs of the voice, which so seldom fail being injured, particularly with young girls who have fallen into those fatal habits which reduced this lady to the deplorable condition she so strikingly and energetically has depicted.

She had previously acquainted me that her stomach had discharged, for some time, small concretions, similar to crumbs of bread. that were of exceedingly bad odor. These came very probably from the chest, and are sometimes the forerunners of consumption.

Fearing that her letters might miscarry, and that it would thereby become known, that she was corresponding with me, (a fear that is always carried to a great extent, especially in such complaints) this young girl always resorted to some artifice in writing to me, that she might not be known to any one but myself. Sometimes she did not limit her-

self to writing anonymously, but sometimes wrote as from an anonymous person. And it was in this manner that she last wrote to me for advice. An innocent artifice, which eloquently and openly condemns the vice, and is the best eulogium of good morals. Virtue neither seeks to show nor to conceal herself. But to act as the person in question has done, is a plain proof that she does not despise virtue, and at the same time exhibits a sorrow that she ever forsook her paths.

Letter of the 26th of July of the same year:

"Sir: Since last writing to you, some little change for the better has taken place with regard to Madamoiselle ———, whom you have been attending. I saw her a few days ago, and she requested me to acquaint you that she had regained some strength, by carefully attending to your advice. She is still however troubled with bleedings at the nose, though she has only had two slight irritations of the descriptions she spoke of, within the last fourteen weeks, which disappeared without having recourse to medicine. She does not complain so much of fatigue now, though her shivering fits and loss of blood by the nose, continue almost the same, and she has some apprehensions that she will never be entirely free from them She tells me, that her lips when she gets up in the morning are very white, and that sundry red spots are perceptible in her eyes, which sometimes speedily disappear, while at others, they last the whole day, that she generally looks very ill, and is also very hoarse; also, that whenever she eats fruit, she has unpleasant twitches in the stomach, that impede her freely breathing. The spots in her eyes annoy and disturb her very much."

The shivering and agitation of which this person

makes frequent complaint, and which she seems to attribute to the circulation of her blood, are merely symptomatic of a nervous irritation, and the extreme weakness of the nerves. Her bleeding at the nose and spitting of blood, notwithstanding its diminution, and come other symptoms, though betokening the return of strength, and the red spots in the eyes, may yet have some remote tendency to a scorbutic complaint: and as this complaint exists in her family, it has no doubt been developed in her by her unhappy secret propensities.

LETTER XIII.

In the preceding letters, I have cited a comparison that two physicians have made between a female and a young tree in blossom, and you may have remarked how much truth and judgment there is shown in this approximation. But there is one point (without now referring to many others) that singularly elevates one of these trees above the other. It is that of thinking, at one time with dignity, at another with delicacy. That fatal passion which strikes so deeply at health, as well as beauty, does it even respect understanding and wisdom? The answer has been already given in the course of these letters, both by skilful doctors and unhappy victims. But we will again for a moment listen to them.

"If I again ask observing physicians what is the

most dishonoring result of solitary vice," observes the first, Dr. Dampe, "to a being born for the proper use of the mental faculties, it is the rapid and entire destruction of all the mental powers. Even those young persons in whom all the love for mental occupations is not extinct, have not the power to reflect or to fix their attention on any one object their memory which at such an age is generally so tenacious, is so weakened that they can no longer remember what they have read or heard, their imagination is so disordered, that whether walking or sleeping, it is occupied with nothing but impure thoughts—every feeling of good and beautiful in Nature which produces for us so many moments of enjoyment is effaced from their hearts. No longer is any impression made upon them, either by the sight of a beautiful landscape or the appearance of a beautiful summer's night, nor of the rising sun. The knowledge of their own incapacity for all useful occupations drives them more and more from society; perhaps they may even fear that their crime may be read branded on their brows."

This physician is here but the faithful interpreter of the truth; and one day the following was part of a letter written to him: "The powers of my mind, among other failings, have suffered a decline which I cannot conceal from myself, my imagination was lively—it is now nearly nothing; my memory was good—I have no longer any."*

"The unfortunate victims of this habit," says another observer, Dr. Vogel, "insensibly lose all moral faculties they possess; they acquire a besotted, drinking, embarrassed, melancholy, and stupid look; they become idle, inimical to and incapable of all intellectual effort; all presence of

* Letter quoted by Dr. Doussin Dubreuil.

mind is lost; they are put out of countenance, uneasy, troubled the moment they enter into society; they are unprepared and at a loss if compelled to speak even to a child. Their enfeebled mind gives way under the slightest exertion; their memory daily growing worse, they cannot understand the commonest things nor correct the simplest ideas; the most sublime talents and the greatest powers are soon destroyed. All formerly acquired knowledge, the most perfect understanding, no longer produce any fruit; vivacity, pride, all the faculties of the soul by which they were formerly distinguished, abandon them and leave no other feeling for them but scorn; the power of imagination has taken its flight—there is no longer any pleasure for them; but on the contrary, all that is miserable and distressing appears congenial to their feelings; unhappiness, fear, terror, which are their only passions, banish every agreeable sensation from their minds; the last crisis of melancholy and the most fearful suggestions of despair ordinarily precede their death, or else they sink into a complete apathy, and fallen below the animals possessing the least instinct, they retain nothing of their species but its form; it sometimes occurs that the most perfect idiotcy or madness first manifest themselves."

A letter, among many others, written on this subject to the celebrated physician of Lausanne, fully proves the exactness of this fresh evidence. The following passage occurs in it: "My mental energy is considerably weakened; the ardor of my imagination nearly destroyed; the love of life much less strong; all that occurs now appears like a dream to me; I have more difficulty in thinking, and less power of mind."

These pictures are not exaggerated either on the part of the physician or the invalid. The brain being the organ—or if the expression be preferred—the sanctuary of thought, we can easily conceive that the destruction of intellect might result from vicious habits; either the irritated nerves first transmit their irritation to the brain, and it changes with them; or, the stomach, weakened or depraved by this madness, no longer maintains the brain in an healthy state. In either case, how can it be expected that those functions should not be disturbed?

We may perceive to a certainty by the enumeration of the causes of all kinds of mental alienation, by which Professor Pinel, chief physician of a hospital which contains 1800 mad people, commences the history of each of these maladies: that one of the most common causes is an attachment to vicious habits. Lewis, an English physician, in describing the effect of the same crime on the moral faculties, expresses himself thus: "The urinal is effected by all the ills of the body, but particularly of those which spring from this cause.—The deepest melancholy, aversion for all pleasures; incapability of taking part in any subject of conversation; a feeling of their own misery, and the despair felt from knowing that they have brought it on themselves; the necessity of renouncing the happiness of marriage—are the wretched thoughts which compel these unfortunate men to separate themselves from the world, and to seek, too often, an end for their misery in suicide."

"I do not think that any human being was ever afflicted with so many evils as I am," writes a person habituated to this crime, to Tissot: "without a special help from Providence, I shall have great difficulty in bearing so heavy a load."

If nothing so soon takes from life its enchantment as immorality, the observation is particularly true when that immorality is secret. Tender feelings, glorious hopes, sweet illusions, from which youth *sometimes* borrows its name, so often its happiness (youth is frequently the age of illusions); voluptuous admiration of the universe; delightful imagination; mysterious and affecting return of the seasons; shadows and silence of the woods, so fitted for the perusal of the words of wisdom; sweet and innocent satisfaction of our self-esteem, in daily acquiring something new and something excellent—all disappear, all vanish. But should we be astonished? The foreseeing author of nature appears to have given to the human race, to watch over its happiness, two amiable divinities—Imagination and Hope. To one has been entrusted the duty of painting—at least, at times,—in brilliant colors, the dark landscapes; the other of the various horizons of our life: and yet nothing so completely destroys all imagination and hope as the secret breach of chastity. How can a body, overwhelmed with infirmities, and everywhere failing, contain a vigorous and contented mind? And what, I ask, is life, when there is nothing that can touch the imagination or the heart—when there is nothing that can delight, neither the language of poetry, the pleasures of flowers; hope, which to others is an enjoyment at once consoling and sustaining,—what is life in such a case?—An agony in the middle of a desert.

Woman, more sensitive than robust, whose constitution renders her bodily organs more active than strong, whose mind is rather characterised by quick penetration and delicacy of tact, than by firmness—woman appears precisely organised to experience

with the greatest facility, those deep depressions of soul, beyond which there only exist despair, or entire destruction of the intellectual faculties. True it is, that if by the nature of their organization, the saddening passions produce great impressions on woman; on the other hand, they are less durable, but when this solitary crime is the cause of such passions with them, this cause will continue to produce the same effects, whether moral or physical; the imprudent individuals who abandon themselves to it will meet with no diminution, and much less will they escape entirely from their miseries by that particular flexibility of their constitution. No other support is left them but their natural weakness and delicacy, and medical statistics show a far greater number of women than men, affected with mental diseases.

LETTER XIV.

If it can be said with some degree of justice of a female who once enjoyed health, beauty and all the graces which can enhance them, and who has been actually deprived of them—that she has survived herself—how shall we give expression to the state of that person, who not only has lost these first named advantages, but, in addition, all her mental faculties; who is utterly different to all that she was before, and who possesses no moral existence. The chief mode of existence—that is to say,

physical existence—being no longer the same, that which principally constitutes moral existence—the feeling or reasoning perception of *self*—no longer remaining, we cannot even say that she survives, and yet she has not ceased to exist.

The following are some further examples of the power of the unhappy passion we are discussing: they are the proofs of the truth of what was contained in the last letter.

"Secret habits had produced such disorder in the reason of Mademoiselle ———, twenty-two years of age, and of great personal attractions,—that she was compelled to be placed in an asylum. She had been there for some time when Doctor Bienville, who had previously been on terms of intimacy with the family of the young lady, but who had been absent for some time, returned to his native place. He went to pay a visit to the family, but not perceiving Mademoiselle ———, he asked to be allowed to pay his respects to her. The unhappy father replied that he could well see that he was ignorant of the extent of his affliction, for he had also lost his wife. But as he soon found that the doctor, his old friend, imagined that his daughter was also dead, he told him that she still existed, and added that she had lived too long, being in such a state as not to be thought of without a shudder. The physician broke off this sad interview. He called on an individual, through whom he knew he could obtain information of the cause of his friend's sufferings. He at once conjectured, from all that was communicated to him, that the state of Mademoiselle ——— was the result of solitary crime, carried on to the greatest extreme. He understood that the two servants of the house were not always strong enough, or perhaps sufficiently

vigilant to restrain her; that sometimes she escaped and fled, and even at times gave rise to fears that she had plunged into one of the many ponds of tha. country. Deeply affected by all that had been told him, Dr. Bienville begged Mr. ——— not to despair of the cure of his daughter.

The asylum in which she had been placed was a convent of Tours; there she was treated in a most brutal manner; he proposed that she should be removed. As the delirium of the young girl was accompanied by an excessive fury, during which she bit and tore with her nails whoever approached her, the superior of the convent asserted that she could not be removed, unless she was chained in a vehicle which was capable of being completely closed. The physician replied that he had thought of everything, and that he would not suffer her to be chained. He sent for a convenient carriage; administered a soothing drink to her; had her clothes taken off, and caused her to be wrapped up in a strong and large linen bandage, fixing her arms to her sides. The unfortunate girl exhibited all the signs of the most frightful fury: her shrieks and the grinding of her teeth were only interrupted by the attempts she made to bite her keepers; but at length they got her away. The doctor meditated over and prescribed for her case with the greatest solicitude, taking care that all his views, whether of medicine or health were carried into effect. He watched over, and himself saw them carried into execution, for some months. He commenced this treatment on the 12th of May. On the sixth of the following August he observed some amendment in the state of his patient. He noticed a greater degree of tranquillity in her; that her insane wanderings were less frequent; she did not so often eject the

medicines prescribed for her; a sense of decency resumed its empire over her odious passion.

Dr. Bienville had hitherto constantly opposed the desire entertained by her father to see her. Up to this time she had only seen her keepers and her physician. For some days, when her father was mentioned to her, she appeared to fall into a profound reverie, just as any rational person would have done. Dr. Bienville concluded from this that the remembrance of her father was beginning again to be the subject of her thoughts, that consequently the different organs of her brain were resuming their natural tone and functions; and so, on the last day of August, that is to say, about four months after the commencement of the treatment, he introduced Mr. ——— into the apartment of his daughter. It was agreed that he should not give way to any symptoms of tenderness which might excite him to tears, in order not to communicate to the patient impressions too strong and dangerous in the state of weakness in which the mental faculties yet were. With the same view, he had announced to Mademoiselle ——— the intended visit of her father. She had made no farther reply to this announcement than to anything else which had been said to her since she had been deprived of her reason. This interview, then, so long desired by her unhappy father, and whose result was expected with so much interest by all who were in the secret; this interview, so long expected, at length took place. But paternal love had not yet suffered enough. The perseverance of the physician was not crowned with its reward. Mademoiselle ——— gazed fixedly on her father, uttered a sigh, and then turned away, as if to avoid an object which gave her annoyance. The physician

did not expect so quiet an interview: he persuaded her father not to prolong it: he even advised him only to pay her rare and short visits, and to do nothing on his part which might fatigue her. Nevertheless, from this moment he himself conversed with her daily, not only of her father, but of the country where she lived, of her walks, her old friends, in fact, of everything he thought likely to restore her memory. She continued obstinately silent, not only to him, but to her father, whom she always regarded with the same astonishment. This continued silence rendered the doctor much more uneasy, for the reason that her general health was gradually being re-established, that an ulcer which had made its appearance on the uterus appeared cicatrised, and that all the excoriations had entirely disappeared.

Mademoiselle ——— was quiet with her keepers. She took, with the greatest docility, the medicines which were given to her, and for three weeks there had been no occasion for the restraint of which we have spoken.

At length, on the 22nd of October, one of the keepers went to the doctor, requesting him to see her as soon as possible, telling him that Mademoiselle had slept all the night; that she had just woke; that, having looked at her and her companion attentively, she had asked who they were, and where she was; that she had replied, that Mademoiselle was with a friend of her father's, and that they had been kept near her by the advice of a doctor, to help her in her illness. Dr. Bienville ran to her apartment. She received him with a cold and languid air which she had always exhibited even during the amelioration of her health. She entreated him at once to send for her father to fetch

ner away, as she no longer desired to be troublesome to him. Mr. ——— immediately repaired to his friend's house. His daughter received him in the same way that she had always done the doctor: she received his embraces with very little emotion, saying to him: "I have just waked from a very long and very fatiguing dream. This dream must have caused me to commit much folly, since you were forced to send me from you. If I have yet any claim on your love, I beg that you will this day remove me home, there to enjoy all the comforts you have ever conferred upon me. I request, also, that your house will be closed against every one, except this gentleman" (pointing to the physician to whom she owed her life and the restoration of her health) "and Mademoiselle Beaudeduit, whom I beg you to send for. The services of this woman" (pointing to her attendant) "will be very acceptable to me: she is the only one who has not troubled my imagination during my dream." It would be difficult to express the replies and the delight of the fond father, continues Dr. Bienville; "he consented to all she asked, and I was cautious not to oppose her."—*Treatise on Nymphomania.*

Dr. Doussin Dubreuil states in the letters already quoted, that he went to see, in an establishment situated near Paris, a female seventeen or eighteen years old, whom solitary habits (to which the attendants could not tell him how long she had been addicted), had rendered so stupid, that she had lost all recollection of her father, who could not get her to recognize him, notwithstanding all his efforts. This deplorable situation, which had already cost her parents so many tears, did not prevent her from taking her meals, and she eat voraciously, as is generally the case with the victims of this habit.

In the same collection of letters, is the report of another physician, Dr. Vogel, couched in the following words:

"There is, to my knowledge, in a certain town, an unmarried female, twenty-three years of age whom this solitary vice at first rendered raving mad, but who some time past has sunk into a state of the most absolute imbecility. She never utters a single word. She allows herself to be treated as though she were lifeless. She closes her eyes the moment she sees any one. During the greater part of the day her head is sunk forward, and she constantly retains this attitude, when seated on a chair."

I will here make a passing remark, for I am desirous to hurry over these afflicting cases, that this tendency of the head to fall forward and to roll about through the weakness of the muscles and ligaments about the neck on to the chest, right or left, or forward, is one of the results, and the most frequent sign, of that solitary weakness carried to a certain extent.

Lastly, I myself have observed this third example. An unhappy mother, whose child was suffering at one and the same time from mental alienation and solitary habits, begged me some months since to call and see what she told me was the object of her greatest grief; she was not aware which of these two maladies had preceded the other, or else she would not tell me notwithstanding the great desire and the reasons I expressed to know.

It was a winter's evening; very dark and cold. She conducted me to the window of a little room which looked out into a garden. "See if I am not to be pitied," said she, softly opening one of the shutters. I observed a female, about thirty year-

old, seated near a table with a lamp on it; her neck and breast uncovered, her hands mechanically supported on her thighs; her feet naked, her hair in disorder, her features wild, her complexion sallow, her shoulders and all her extremities starting convulsively beneath her dress; and, lastly, to complete all the horror of this picture, she sat in a state of marble-like immobility.

"The sight frightens me," added, in a low tone, and with great emotion, the tender mother, at the same time gently closing the shutter. This did not astonish me; she was a mother, and the spectral appearance of this wretched creature, whom we had just seen in the obscure light of the lamp, which appeared indifferent to her—the silence which reigned around her—were well calculated to create alarm.

We entered; I approached her—I spoke to her, but I could obtain no satisfactory answer. She never made any other reply than by the monosyllable 'yes," to whatever question was put to her; never changed her position, whatever invitation or entreaty was made. When it was necessary for her to retire to rest, they were obliged to use force; and it was the same when they wished her to rise. She remained in this state many years; frequently, particularly at night, she uttered loud and frightful shrieks, which I frequently heard, and which were in all respects similar to what would be uttered by a person violently seized by the throat

LETTER XV.

The histories (well authenticated) of the unfortunate beings, which I have just communicated to you, must have sufficiently proved to you the deplorable influence of a fault than which nothing is more fatal and terrible in its influence over the mental faculties. What lovely verses, what interesting stories, are due to you to repay you for the fatigue that letter caused you—for the sadness with which it naturally filled you. And here, doubtless, it behoves me to mingle with my advice the flowers of which I have already spoken to you. I will endeavor to make you amends by dwelling on the mental beauty with which your sex is endowed when no evil influence prevails. Traits of an agreeable nature cannot fail to present themselves in crowds.

What delicacy! what elegance! what attractive influence, in fact, does the mind of woman present! It appears to me to be, in reference to talent and genius, what grace is to the health, and beauty to the body. If the grace of the body imparts to it in the highest degree the power of pleasing, the mind of woman embellishes all it touches—throws over it a charm of delicacy and ease which is ever seductive. It is concerning that grace which characterises her, and which the least change may wither or destroy, that the French Zeuxis has said:

"Nothing so fleeting as these delicate tints:
Yet we delight to seize such transient forms."

The natural weakness of our whole being—the facility with which our senses are blunted under the constant impression of objects, induces us, more

or less quickly, to see almost with indifference a lovely woman or a pretty face. Features, and a complexion which at first struck us remarkably, soon possess nothing extraordinary or attractive to us. They please us; they are still in harmony with our souls; but there ends all their power. At the end of a certain time they no longer cause either that surprise—that agreeable emotion, nor that delicious agitation with which they filled us the first time we saw them. The mind, on the contrary, is an attraction which increases in power, and which never ceases to please.

That author formed a just appreciation of the power of beauty who remarked, "that it resembled odors, to which, when accustomed, we no longer smelt them."

An old writer very wisely said, that it was a short-lived tyranny; but when in a female it was united to wit and an amiable character, this tyranny, otherwise so transient, was soon changed into a long and mild empire. It is only under such auspices, and under such an empire, that constancy is to be found. More than beauty is needed for a woman to be spoken of as Titus spoke of Berenice:

> "For five whole years have I seen her each day;
> Yet each day do I believe I see her for the first time."

The female who is only beautiful, soon ends as every other indifferent object does, by only striking the eye. The woman, on the other hand, who is gifted with mind and virtue, is one to please for ever. If she is beautiful, her mind adds to her beauty, if she be not lovely, it supplies its place. How could it be otherwise than certain to please for a long time? for then we love in her what is most durable, and what is least likely to inspire satiety.

It was this privilege by which the Tenaiers, the Lafayettes, the Sevignes, La Sablieres, Geoffrius, Dutriven, and many other celebrated women, arrived at an advanced age without having, if we may so express ourselves, grown old, nor ceased to be the sovereigns of the most brilliant and aristocratical circles of their day. Such merit, acquired and preserved, forms, as has been remarked with as much truth as wit, a charm which is not exposed to wither as the lilies and the roses, and which prolongs the reign of a pretty woman till the autumn of her days.

Alas! how different, how sadly different is the life of the female secretly consumed by the most fatal of the passions. She reigns too; but it is only in the most distressing solitude. She may be beautiful, witty, amiable, loved; but she most assuredly will not be so long. We may also say of her, that she never grows old; but here we use the word in its literal sense; for she either dies in the flower of her age, or else she arrives at old age without ever having been young. But I return to the intelligent powers with which nature has so richly gifted your sex. Indeed, there may be named a very great number of women who have possessed them to a very high degree.

History presents us with recitals of the greatest fortunes, and even the most powerful thrones, having been gained by the genius of women whose comparatively low origin and complete indigence would appear to have completely precluded them the chance of such a dignity. Thus, although beautiful, Catherine the 1st. owed more to her superior genius than to her charms, the title of wife to the Czar Peter and the vast empire to which she succeeded. The glory of her reign is well known.

Francoise d'Aubigne, widow of the poet Scarron, afterwards Duchess of Maintenon, inspired so profound an esteem in the heart of Louis 14th, and so reigned over him that after having secretly considered her brow worthy of the diadem, she, considering such an honor beneath her if it was not publicly conferred, demanded and obtained a promise from the monarch, that he would publicly announce his marriage with her.*

Fenelon in fact said of her that it was wisdom expressing herself by the mouth of the graces.

It has often occurred in circumstances of the greatest importance, when success depended on address and finesse that women have been selected in preference to men of known skill. According to Voltaire, Augustus King of Poland, finding his crown tottering equally from the victories of Charles the 12th of Sweden, and the ill-will of the senate towards him, preferring rather to receive the harsh commands of his conqueror than of his subjects, determined to solicit truce from the king of Sweden, and wished to sign a secret treaty with him. It was necessary to conceal this step from the senate, whom he regarded as a more intractable enemy. The affair was a delicate one; he therefore relied upon the Countess of Konigsmark, a Swedish lady

* "Louis, finding that he could not combat with her (says M. de Segur *on the merit, character, and condition of women*), felt the need of summoning to his aid two men of genius, Bossuet and Fenelon. Here we see this powerful king full of nobleness, resisting al Europe, unable to resist a woman. We find so much glory and majesty united to so much weakness—we see lastly intimidated glory seeking refuge with eloquence and virtue to preserve himself from the empire of beauty."

I would remark here as connected with this last expression, *beauty*, that the triumph of Madame de Maintenon was rather due to her genius and the high esteem with which she had inspired Louis the 14th, than to her beauty, since at that time she was more than fifty years old.

of high birth, to whom he was at that time attached."

In the 13th century, the daughter of a Bolognese gentleman gave herself up entirely to the study of the latin language, and of law. At the age of twenty-three, she pronounced in the grand church of Bologna a funeral oration in latin. At twenty-six she publicly read the Institutes of Justinian. At thirty she obtained a chair from which she taught the law to a vast audience from all nations, and her eloquence caused not only her sex, but even her beauty to be forgotten, and for nearly four consecutive centuries, at Bologna women were mistresses of the learned languages and professors of the highest sciences.

At Verona one Nogaralla, in the 15th century made for herself so great a reputation by her eloquence that kings and celebrated men desired to see and hear her.

Jane Grey whom a cruel queen caused to be murdered on the scaffold, at seventeen read in Greek before going to death, the sublime dialogue of Plato on immortality.

Mary Stuart wrote and spoke six languages, composed very fair verses in our own, and while very young, pronounced at the French court, which she called her second country, a Latin discourse, in which she proved that the study of literature was equally proper for women as for men.

The virtues of Margaret More,* the eldest daughter of the famous English chancellor, Sir Thomas More, alone raised her above her con

* This magnanimous heroine of filial piety had caused it to be transported in a leaden box, to Canterbury, to the tombs of the Roper family (the family of her husband), the head of her father, and desired that at her death it should be placed between her arms.

temporaries. Her father was beheaded under Henry the 8th, in 1535. After having by great address succeeded in paying him in prison the most affectionate attention; having purchased, at a high price, the right to render him funeral honors; after having been reduced to obtain at the price of gold, the sacred head of her parent from the hands of the executioner, she was herself accused and dragged in chains to prison for two crimes (it is thus that the wicked designate good actions): the one for having preserved as a sacred relic that head so dear to her—the head of her father, the other for having preserved his books and manuscripts. She appeared before her judges with the intrepidity of a great mind, justified herself with all that eloquence inspired by unfortunate virtue; she commanded the admiration and the respect of all, and trampling over her barbarous accusers, wore out the rest of her life in solitude, grief, and study.

The brow which was bound with the first coronet granted by the French Academy, was that of a woman, Mademoiselle de Scuderi, who has the honor of having obtained the first prize of Eloquence which this learned society delivered.

Madame Dacier has acquired for herself a species of immortality by her numerous translations of the ancients, Homer, Terence, and others; and which for a long time were the best we had; as well as by other literary works. She was honored by receiving the praises of Bayle, La Motte, Voltaire and a great number of other celebrated writers.

Taneguy, her father, a very erudite man, used to give lessons to his son in the same apartment in which she when twelve years of age, was en-

gaged in embroidery. She listened attentively, but in silence, and thus profited by these lessons without its being suspected; one day when her brother made a false reply, she told him in a low tone what he ought to have said. Their father heard her with as much surprise as joy, and from this moment he divided his attentions equally between his son and daughter.

The Duke of Montansier placed on the list of the commentators on the ancient authors, which were selected for the education of the dauphin, Madame Dacier, who took precedence of all who were charged with this laborious task.*

I myself, owe to a celebrated woman, Madame de Genlis, from one of her numerous works, the knowledge of some of those particulars which I have related.

But who could tell all concerning the mental powers, and the literary merit of women in a letter, even though it were a long one. I will not undertake it, and I demand permission to devote at least another to what I had proposed to say on this interesting subject.

* Florus appeared in 1684.—Aurelius Victor in 1681.—Eutropius in 1683, and another work in 1684.—"Thus," says Bayle, "was our sex completely conquered by this clever woman, since, during a time in which several men did not produce a single author, Madame Dacier published four."

LETTER XVI.

I have already told you, in speaking of some of the qualities of your sex, that it was one of the intentions of nature in creating them to impart to them in a high degree the art of pleasing.

What did nature really intend in creating woman? Two things, principally:—that they should be amiable beings and tender mothers; that they should be amiable beings in order to attract the regards and affections of their husbands; that they should be good mothers in order that both should survive in their children. We can well imagine that the woman who is not amiable is not natural but artificial. Women, indeed, have been richly endowed by nature, and whoever culls from the world of letters as well as from society generally, all the productions and chief discourses of women will have culled from it all that is really most delicate and elegant, leaving only the heavier portion behind. It is needless for me to add that I do not comprehend in this assertion the writings of a very small number of privileged hands—such as those, of some ancient, and some modern poets; of Voltaire, of La Fontaine, Gresset, Delille, as well as the witty flights which sometimes proceed from the mouths of some men.

And what has produced these flowers if not nearly always the inspiration of women.

Madame de Caylus wrote some memoirs which were so admired when they appeared for the first time that all the wits of the day seemed to strive which should bestow on her the most just and most flattering praises. The Marquis La Fare wrote, in the tribute he paid her on this work, that

to console him for his old age the youthful master of the universe had said to him :—

"Complain no more,
I promise thee a glance from Caylus."

Who knows not the elegant poetry, often verging on the domains of philosophy of Madame Deshouliers ? her rivulets, her flowers, her tender sheep ?

"Without wisdom, without science
Happier and wiser than we."

It would be easy, besides the name of this illustrious lady and her daughter, to name a host of females who all recal to mind the most delightful and most elegant productions, not only in one class of literature but in all, almost without exception. That of Madame de Sevigne will scarcely give me the time to write it ere the thousands on thousands of lively and attractive narratives in her inimitable letters will present themselves to your mind. That of Madame de Graffigny will also recal to your mind all the delicacy of sentiment of the Peruvian letters which you have perhaps read. Biographies, perfect memoirs, novels, delicious romances, are immediately brought before me by the names of Montpensier, Nemours, Stael, La Fayette, Givri, Flahaut, Riccoboni, Genlis, and many other celebrated women. Lastly, poetry will dictate to sensibility and the graces, to engrave for ever in their annals the names of Mesdames Dubocage, Beauharnais, Verdier, Bourdie, Montauclos, Geoffrey. But vainly would I allow myself to be led away by the charm of the recollections which all these names successively and

mutually awake; in vain would I name and praise all those who deserve it; I could not do it, and my intention in this place is not to write a literary history of women.

They have sometimes been accused of want of judgment, I think it would be more correct to accuse them of weakness and faithlessness in their determinations, and not of inability to recognise the connection of objects with each other. It would not be difficult to name a great number of females who have shown that they have possessed this faculty in as great a degree as wit. They generally have great taste, and is not this very quality the effect of exquisite judgment, may it not be regarded as the greatest embellishment Aspasia, a celebrated Grecian, flattered herself that Socrates, Demosthenes, and Pericles, all men of the most transcendant genius had brought to perfection, while with her, the beauty of their discourses.

Did not our immortal fabulist, La Fontaine, so full of instinct, of good sense, and even of wit, regard to your sex this testimony of judgment and good taste in the following verses, addressed to Madame de Montespan in dedicating to her one of his charming apologies :—

"He who the poet's ways would gain,
Must first secure your praise;
Oh let this verse a smile obtain;
For there's no beauty in our lays
But you do know and judge it well."

And La Fontaine has proved both by his writings and by his conduct that he was no flatterer.

The taste and the sure judgment of Madame de Maintenon, at least in this circumstance, led her

to maintain, against the opinions of the age, that *Athalie* was a sublime tragedy ; and posterity, ever impartial and discerning, has confirmed her judgment. Bossuet when aged sixteen, was led into a saloon in the Hotel de Rambouillet : the marchioness had the glory of predicting that he would become a great orator.

Madame de Guercheville discovered in Richelieu, when very young, and while certainly very far from promising, the seeds of a superior genius. She caused him to take the first step towards that high fortune which rendered him the arbiter of the destinies of Europe, and of kings themselves.

"Women," says M. Dampmartin, "do not confine themselves to discerning merit, and to granting to it that barren homage with which the greater part of men believe they recompense it : they encourage, they support and foster it. Their sensibility and their vanity are equally gratified by seeing talent obtain its reward through their care ; and moreover they attach themselves to literature with an ardor unknown to men."*

But what protection can be given—by what judgment can be manifested—of what importance can become those females who willingly condemn themselves to exiles from the world ? What amiable qualities can be manifested by those women who are mad enough, daily, to destroy in secret all the means of pleasing, given to them by Nature. Entirely absorbed by their filthy habit, equally incapable of creating as of appreciating, never are the songs of glory or the avowal of any sentiment, the tender presage of approaching union, heard by them. Austere individuals, who read their guilt upon their brow, reproach them harshly for it in their own

* Essay on the Literature of Women.

hearts: those whom generosity and benevolence never abandon—pity them; can any other sentiment be entertained for them? But every one turns away his gaze, as though he had passed a flower which had withered and dried up before it had become developed, and before it had bloomed in its beauty. Never will be given to them, as was done to the Duchess of Valentinois, the surname of *the wisest of beauties, and the most beautiful of the wise.*"

Voltare could not say to them as he did to Madame Dubocage, who visited him at Ferney, that "there was something wanting in her head-dress," placing on her brow at the same time a crown of laurel.

To be ill, or in suffering: such is the whole of their existence: to be unknown or despised; such is their fate. And what felicity, in fact, can be merited by a girl whose fearful vice has reduced her to a state in which she cannot recognize her own father. But if it be afflicting to humanity to speak of such beings, our picture is indeed a bright one when we behold the genius and wit, the arts, talents, and virtues, which encircled the grace and amiability of a Sevigne and a La Sabliere.*

* Some persons will perhaps reproach me for appearing to impose too much on females the obligation of cultivating the arts and sciences; I will explain myself on this matter: I do not think that they ought to occupy themselves with them to the extent of neglecting the duties which ought to hold the first rank, and engage the attention of all reasonable women. But I do not coincide with the opinion of those who believe that it is improper for women to cultivate literature; if there have been pedants among literary women, have there never been pedants among the men? As to family cares, from which study man draws them, are they not attracted from them by pleasures far more frivolous, and far more reprehensible, which are not considered improper, although they are daily followed up.

We find the following expression in the *Eulogium* of Madame de Sevigne, by Madame the President of Brisson, who carried off the prize at the Academy of Marseilles, in 1777, "that during the youth

LETTER XVII.

Marcus Aurelius gives it as an axiom in his "*thoughts*," that high spirited and excellent minds become attached to virtue from taste for virtue, by the sole feeling of its sublimity; while common minds only follow it as courtiers follow a sovereign, attracted by the hope of the benefits that it may shed on them.* I should be despised had I persuaded myself that wisdom would only have pleased you from the considerations I had presented to you —beauty, health, and wit; this was far from my thought, and I am about to speak to you of the real reasons for attachment to it, which hold, I doubt not, the first rank in your estimation: I mean morality and virtue.

Some one has very judiciously remarked, that women are not solely destined to charm the eye; that they have been created for a nobler end than merely to be a pleasing sight; that their charms should be but the prestige of more touching qualities, and that to reduce them to depend only on their charms is to degrade them.

If, in fact, we desire to discover what is the cause of that lively satisfaction, of that species of enchantment, so to speak, which takes possession

of Madame de Sevigne, there were brought up in the domestic schools, excellent wives and mothers, but that this kind of merit did not exclude these ladies from superiority in many branches of literature.

Madame de Sevigne was erudite; was she at all the less a good mother or a good wife?

* This maxim in a manner naturally arises out of that beautiful chapter of this excellent emperor on vain glory; or rather this whole chapter is but a one paraphrase of this maxim, which forms one of its paragraphs: "When you have desired to do good, an have succeeded, why, like a man without judgment, seek for anythin, else such as the reputation of benevolence or gratitude?"

of the heart when a lovely women appears, we shall soon find that it has its source at least in honorable minds, in those delicate and affect onate sentiments, of which her beauty only appears, if I may so express myself, the seductive emblem.

Benardin de St. Pierre says, speaking of men of the world—that they know women under no other title than that of the *fair sex;* but if they are only beautiful to those who have nothing but eyes, for those who have a heart they are also that sex which for nine months, at the peril of her life, carries man in her womb, and the sex that nourishes and cherishes him in his infancy. They are the pious sex which carries him when young to the altar, that inspires him with the love of a religion which the cruel policy of men too often renders odious to him. They are the peaceful sex which never sheds the blood of its equals; the consoling sex which watches over the sick and touches without wounding.*

But if at first we are tempted to cherish as well as esteem such a person, she only inspires indifference or disgust, when we learn that she is devoid of morality, and incapable of feeling any of those holy affections, filial love, conjugal affection, maternal love, virtuous and tender friendship, pity, and compassion.

In the absence of these sentiments, we no longer recognize the characteristics of a pious daughter, of a wife, or a mother; and yet such are too frequently the individuals who give themselves up to this solitary passion. When once—and she, too frequently is subject to so great a degree of tyranny —this fatal error has established its empire in the imagination of the young girl, and even of the

* Studies of Nature 12mo edition, 11 vols.

woman, the last relics of modesty, of filial piety, of conjugal love, of maternal affection, so powerful in the heart of a mother, all disappear—all are extinguished: of the torch of Love, of the torch of Hymen, not a spark remains. The nuptial couch now only receives the miserable and stranger body of a female who was once a tender and faithful wife, and perhaps a mother.

What sad objects here present themselves to us. If I have been unable to pronounce before you the word *crime*, how shall I dare to unveil pictures which represent it in all its most horrible forms for I speak, particularly at this moment, of the conduct of those females whose excesses are much more the effects of a depraved appetite, than of a simple error, or any other cause? How, I say, shall I dare to unveil to you such pictures? Besides, such lessons cannot be understood by everybody; a virgin mind, such as yours, cannot even conceive of such monstrosities; innocence and ignominy cannot understand each other. The horror of the facts which I am about briefly to speak of, spite of myself, arrests my thoughts.

We sometimes see in woman whose strength of constitution has carried off the victory over this homicidal vice, and has not as yet permitted that they should pay with their lives, or by maladies more bitter than death, those horrible symptoms which they have themselves sought;* we see that after having for a long time obeyed and satisfied this frightful passion, that it suddenly breaks out in its full power, stifles all reason, violates all moral principle; and these same women, with

* This is only when there is but a simple and perhaps obscure inflammation of the womb, or of some of its appendages, such as the ovaries, &c.

inflamed eye-balls, with haggard features, sometimes pale, sometimes furiously animated, pollute their paternal roof or conjugal hearth with their horrid frenzy; with disordered garments, sometimes they fly about like perfect Bacchantes, and both by their discourse and actions, they become the most vile and degraded of beings.

I saw, at Paris, three of these deplorable examples; two in the hospital, the Hotel Dieu, where they were obliged to bind two women like two mad people; and one in a public place, in a young girl who was rushing about, and uttering the most horrible obscenity.

Under what head shall I describe the following phenomena? Under that of immorality or madness? Singular perplexity! I am about to speak again of the peasant girl to whom I have already alluded. This unfortunate girl, according to the account of Professor Alibert, was accustomed to retire into thickets and the most sequestered localities, to gratify her horrible penchant. Two whole years rolled over, and her intellectual faculties were observed gradually to become weaker. She almost appeared an idiot, and she was at length removed to the Hospital Saint Louis, where, under the most frightful delirium, she perpetually exhibited the most indecent actions, having no command over herself, despite the constant remonstrances addressed to her.*

These examples are not so rare as might be imagined; every kind of forgetfulness, every species of perversion, both physical and moral,

* Work already quoted. The fruitlessness of the reproaches of those who attended her can scarcely produce astonishment. Her state was in reality one constant delirium, and the frightful acts to which she constantly yielded but a species of brain fever.

may be the fearful consequences of this horrible predilection. It sometimes exhibits to us a woman the mother of a family, perishing in the fiftieth year of her age,—a victim of all the evils which she owed to this shameful habit, amidst suffering, borne down by the greatest agony; surrounded by fearful thoughts of the punishment awaiting her crimes; perfectly aware of the vice which killed her; and with death, as a result, lingering over her before he struck the fatal blow.*

I myself saw a woman whose situation presented the closest and most afflicting resemblance to the above. She was forty years of age. This unnatural passion had brought on such excessive and constant irritability, and rendered the disgusting gratification so mechanical, inasmuch as reason and intelligence had no longer any power over her; that although a strait waiscoat was placed on her, without any openings, through which her arms could pass, and though she was surrounded by many persons, who kept her in a bath, in which she was daily placed for convulsions which attacked her, every moment they were obliged to place her arms in an attitude different to that which they obstinately and incessantly assumed, as though it was the only one natural to them.

As to feelings, these revolting words are contained in some letters published by Doctor Doussin Dubreuil, and unveil one of the frightful effects of this passion on the heart: "I had attained such a degree of insensibility (is this word sufficient to express such corruption)? that I felt myself able to hear of the death of my father and mother, whom

* Fact communicated to Pettit by Dr. Etienne Martin, one of the most celebrated physicians in Lyons

I had so dearly loved, without shedding one tear."* There is in existence a letter from a female, who confessed that this fatal vice had so worked upon her heart, as to have rendered her husband an object of detestation and horror.†

Lastly (for I cannot too soon finish this enumeration), I had the opportunity of seeing the mother of a family, who had lived long in this criminal indulgence, end by paying no more attention to her own children than if they had no longer existed; while she showed the most complete affection towards the infamous authors of her excesses. I know that she had it in contemplation to make over a part of her property to these vile beings. This project was partly accomplished: she perished, and crime received the inheritance of innocent orphans.

LETTER XVIII.

What character and what morals, what virtues and what affections, can be the portions of the husbands of such companions!—of wives who are no longer wives,—of mothers who are no longer mothers; or of the unhappy parents of girls in madness? Is it amongst them that the former (husbands) can find the rivals of those immortal women whose names recal all the most exquisite of the domestic virtues? An Epponina, who for nine years shared with her

* Letters already quoted. † English Letters.

proscribed husband an obscure cave, and there rendered him more than once a father, in order that he might have a greater number of suppliants to his prince: an Arria, who, shuddering at the prospect of her husband's public execution, showed him, by plunging a sword into her own bosom, that there was nothing easier than to escape the executioner; and assured him, as she drew it forth again, that it gave *no pain!* thus did her generous solicitude for her husband deprive her of every other feeling.

Is it necessary, then, that we should seek for a Paulina, the wife of Seneca, whose attachment to her husband was so great, that when he was compelled to kill himself, she opened her own veins with him, and who, not having died, bore upon her countenance, for the few years she survived, the honorable palor which attested that a part of her blood had flowed with that of her husband's. An Agrippina (to cite an example of another kind of virtue), who, while still young, shut herself up in an obscure retreat, and who, without suffering her pride to yield to the most formidable of tyrants, nor her manners to be corrupted by the vices of her age; as implacable towards the murderer of her husband, as she was faithful to that husband; and passed her life in weeping for the one, and hating the other. No; assuredly such women possess a supernatural greatness of mind; while the weakened bodies of those who indulge in solitary habits only contain souls, like themselves, without vigor, and incapable of any great action.

Oh, days of antiquity! oh, ages in which so many virtues and such noble sentiments were displayed! with what an admirable example of filial piety do you still present us. The magistrates of Rome condemned a father to the horrible punishment of death

by starvation; he was closely confined; orders were issued, and measures taken, that he might receive no nourishment. Out of respect to the gods, his daughter alone obtained permission to see him once a day; being, however, minutely examined before she could reach his cell. The time in which famine should have slain its victim approaches—it has come—it has passed; and yet the old man still exists!—his features are unaltered. Surprise caused the precautions already taken to be redoubled; the daughter of the prisoner is secretly watched, and——her virtue discovered. Filial piety and religion taught her daily to uncover her breasts—the blood of a pious daughter daily returned to its sources; the unfortunate father from that fountain drew back the life he had given!

What cannot virtue do? She had prolonged the days of the old man—she had saved him; he did not die; his pardon was granted—who could refuse it to him? More than this was done: the deed of Pero (for such was the name of this virtuous daughter) was so great and so admirable, that a recompense was even adjudged to herself.*

If from our own history I seek for noble actions, and proofs of affection and sublime feeling manifested by women, it presents me with numbers of all descriptions. I take the first from the life of Madame de Sevigne, whose letters you well know.

Madame de Greignan was attacked with a severe disease; Madame de Sevigne never quitted the bed-side of her daughter. There was but one feeling in her soul, and this was the most tender and painful anxiety for the life of Madame de Greignan. Her adored daughter recovered her health

* This deed is known under the name of Roman Charity

and the most devoted of mothers soon died; her strength not having been equal to her affection.

Marie Dezinska, wife of Louis XV., was as sensible as she was virtuous. Death having deprived her of several children, and at one time of the dauphin her son as well as her father, Stanislaus, King of Poland, she fell into so deep a grief as to sink beneath it. In the last days of her illness, the physician proposed to her some new remedies:—"Give me back," replied she, "my father and my children, and you will cure me."

Will you not here exclaim, my young patient,—"Oh, hearts a hundred times divine!—oh, admirable daughters, devoted wives, tender and affectionate mothers!" But with what disdain such conduct,—deaths so affecting,—must fill you at the same time for those persons to whom we may no longer speak of father or mother, of husband or children, who cannot even shed a tear if they lose them.

Such, nevertheless, is the contrast at once so flattering on one side, and so afflicting on the other, that this most furious of all the passions establishes between women secretly chaste, and those who are not so.

Indifference, ennui, a heart withered and dried up, ill temper, languor, without calling to mind all the fearful infirmities with which the human race can be afflicted, are all that remains to those imprudent persons of whom these letters speak. Feelings of tenderness, delicacy, and sublimity, have all fled their hearts; they no longer shed joy and happiness on their homes, their families, and themselves; no longer do such feelings render them kind towards their servants, affable in society, tender and affectionate to their children,—and,

tastly, capable of the most admirable devotion towards their husbands.

LETTER XIX.

You will know and one day experience the tender feelings of love, a sentiment which attaches you as devotedly to another person as filial affection attaches you to the parents you cherish most. You are made both to inspire and to feel this celestial emotion.

If you await it in the bosom of innocence and chastity, it will surely fill your heart with delightful and exquisite emotions, which will one day be the happiness of a husband as well as your own.

But when it is reared, on the contrary, amidst passions which honor disapproves—it disgraces, it is dangerous, and is productive only of regret and torture. Sometimes it is nourished at the expense of the heart and the imagination, over which it tyrannizes and which it misleads; it then becomes, what the French call *amorous melancholy*. At other times it exists entirely at the expense of honor and is not true love—cannot be conjugal love.

A Latin poet, Catullus, has written a beautiful nuptial chant, commencing with these words:

"Vesper adest, juvenes,"—&c.

An admirable hymn, which shows us the value which is ever attached to female virtue, by depicting the regret felt by a young girl, even at the altar of Hymen—for the moment when she will cease to be a virgin, under the dread of being despised when she is no longer such.

An estimable error, but still an error, since the chaste and faithful wife is no less worthy of our regard and esteem than when she was a virgin; since the young girl who becomes a wife only adds to her duties and virtues, duties and virtues more to be respected.

The ancients considered love in general, as the soul of the universe; in this sense they esteemed it as a principle essentially divine and caused it to be represented in their temples by the sacred fire of Vesta.

You are aware that it was guarded by a certain number of virgins, as much, doubtless, to indicate the idea they formed of their purity; as, because they could imagine no beings more worthy to keep it up than virginity and chastity; and thus to encourage these virtues. You know, also, that it was considered a very great evil if it were extinguished.

I will not tell you, as many persons doubtless will, to stifle in your hearts that tender flame which Heaven implants there; no, this would also be an evil; keep there that virgin love—that precious flame from which such happy and such tender feelings may spiring up—but let not its destiny be changed—let it find a temple in your heart and let innocence and chastity continue to guard it Thus kept, it has in all ages attracted the greatest respect, the greatest honors.

At Rome, the principal magistrates, even the consuls, in meeting a vestal virgin were compelled

to turn from her path. The least injury done to a vestal was punished with death.

As though virtue carried with it in these ancient times a kind of holy unction, capable of purifying bad actions, just as herbs and plants and heavenly balms were employed by the gods, suddenly to cure mortal wounds; the vestals absolved from crime and delivered from death the criminal who was conducting to his doom whom they met, provided they would swear that chance alone had caused their meeting.

They were the only females whose evidence was admitted in courts of justice; their priestesses were selected as arbitresses of differences.

It was in their hands that wills and precious family documents were deposited, chastity being ever attended by other virtues.

The ancient Britons, transported with rage at the recital of the outrages which had been committed upon the daughters of their Queen, Boadicea, resolved to conquer or die.

Among the Angles, he who insulted a virgin was punished with a double penalty to that which he would have suffered if he had insulted a married woman of the same rank.

Happy the people among whom the privileges of virtue are known, reason will never dispute them.

And these honors, my dear reader, can be traced to the remotest antiquity; they were paid among the most anciently enlightened people; and also, among people emerging from barbarism, which proves, without the fear of contradiction, that the esteem entertained for morality is neither the esteem of caprice or taste, but that it has its source in the advantages which men ever desire from it.

The Poems of Homer, which are so ancient that as yet their date has not been satisfactorily fixed, often celebrate chastity.* Nowhere, indeed, have finer elogiums been bestowed upon it; there is no picture which equals that of Andromache and Nausicaa.

The period when the interesting fable of Daphne changed into a laurel tree, while seeking to avoid the pursuit of the most handsome of the gods had birth, is also lost in the mists of antiquity.

"——— Her feet she found
Benumbed with cold and fastened to the ground.
A filmy rind about her body grows,
Her hair to leaves, her arms extends to boughs.
The nymph is all into a laurel gone,
The smoothness of her skin remains alone."

Men could not express their love for morality in a more ingenious or more honorable manner. Cannot we recognize in this agreeable fiction the smile and pledge of the most complete approbation, the desire in a word, of immortalizing virtue.

And how could these judicious ancients have avoided perceiving that without chastity there could no longer be in marriage, esteem, confidence or love. That the most sacred unions would otherwise be but a mockery—the most tender link but a galling chain, that husbands would no longer have true companions, children no longer a bosom to receive nor arms to clasp affectionately around them.

How wise then were these legislatures and these

* According to some chronologists and historians, this prince of poets lived near the coast of Asia Minor, in the year of the world 3,060, or 950 years before the Christian Era. (Foussuet, Berruyer and Fleury.)

guardians of morality, in taking such care to render honor to chastity and virtue.

Guard well then, my dear reader, these moral feelings, deserve thereby that the consuls, if such existed, should turn aside for you as they did for the august guardians of the sacred fire at Rome.

LETTER XX.

I HAVE already told you that the excesses of love were often the results of secret vicious habits in persons corrupted early. I do not confine myself to those excesses in which all moral feeling is lost. As to *amorous melancholy*, it has also been named by many physicians, *amorous madness*. The mind is, in fact, more or less affected; many of its faculties are indeed so highly excited, that the patients then only really differ from other maniacs as regards the cause of their madness. The female constitution disposes to it. Almost entirely destined by Nature to conceive and cherish nought but tender affection; intended for a life rather of comfort than of pain, of tranquility than of agitation and distraction, there is for woman—and particularly for some women—but one step from a vicious secret habit to amorous madness; that disease, in fact, which may be called the madness of the heart.

This new excess is not less hurtful to the general health, than to the mind, and is equally productive of forgetfulness of all moral duties.

The following are two examples which will give you a sufficient idea of some of these different affections; but particularly the last, on which account I chiefly cite them.

"C——— de G——— was so smitten with love that she could neither work, nor walk, nor sleep, nor keep herself upright, nor even speak. According to her, every man and every woman would run and throw themselves into the sea, if the sea had been that love. Absorbed in the depth of that passion, she would frequently go into the garden and confide to the trees and flowers her hysterical passion; or else she rushed all over the house, exclaiming, '*Love, love!*' and then would roll on the ground. The violence of her passion destroyed her health to such an extent that she could not swallow a drop of water, and took no nourishment: she burned without and within; she could not sleep: sometimes she was seized with the most agonizing convulsions; sometimes she fell into a complete stupor. At length she spit blood, became dumb, and died."*

These different affections were all nervous. The patient could not swallow a drop of water because her throat was closed. The blood probably burst from her chest from the same cause. She became dumb and blind from the paralysis of the muscles of the voice and the optic nerves, or that which produces vision; doubtless after the spasms, which

* Zimmerman: Treatise on Medical Experience, vol. 3.

I have seen a female subject to spitting of blood, and very irritable, experience paralytic convulsions in all her limbs, particularly in the anus; a painful tightness, as though of a ligature at the epigastrium and round the loins; a sensation of weight in the chest, and spitting of blood; at a period of sudden moral affection, without having pronounced anything but two or three words in a low tone of voice.

took place to an excessive extent, and which had too frequently occurred in these organs as well as in many other parts of the body.

Second example:

A lady thirty-two years of age, of fine stature, a strong constitution, with blue eyes, white skin, chesnut-colored hair, had been placed in an educational establishment—where the most brilliant future, where the brightest prospects were always offered to those who entered it. Some time after her marriage, she saw a young man of a more elevated rank than her husband. She was immediately smitten with him; she murmured against her lot, and only spoke of her husband with contempt. She refused to live with him, and at length took a decided aversion, not only to him, but to her own parents, who vainly endeavored to cure her of her caprice. The disease increased: it was necessary to separate her from her husband; she spoke incessantly of the object of her passion; she became difficult to please, capricious and passionate. She escaped her parent's house to run after him. She watched him everywhere; she called for him in her impassioned songs; he was the greatest, the most witty, the most amiable, the most perfect of men. She asserted that she was his wife; that she had never known another husband. It was he who lived in her heart, who directed its movements, who governed its thought, who ruled over its actions. She had had a child by him, which should be as accomplished as its father. She was frequently surprised in a kind of ecstacy of ravishing thought; then her gaze was fixed, and a smile was on lips. She frequently addressed letters to him. She made verses, which she filled with the most amorous expressions; she copied them frequently

and with great care. Though they expressed the most violent passion, they were at the same time a proof of the most perfect virtue. When she went out she walked briskly, as if she were engaged on business; or else she would walk slowly and haughtily. She avoided men, all of whom she despised and placed far beneath her lover. Nevertheless, she was not always indifferent to any mark of interest displayed towards her; but any ardent expression offended her; and to any overtures made to her, she opposed the name, the merit, the qualities, and perfections of him whom she adored. Often during the day and night, she would talk to herself, sometimes aloud and sometimes in a low tone. Sometimes she wept, sometimes she smiled; sometimes she was angry with herself in her solitary conversations. If she was told of her loquacity, she assured them that she was compelled to speak. Most frequently it was her lover who conversed with her, by means only known to herself. Sometimes she believed that some individuals, jealous of her happiness, endeavored to mar it by breaking up these interviews, and by striking her (I have seen her almost furious, shrieking and declaring that she had just been struck.) Under other circumstances, her face became red, her eyes sparkling; she could not recognize her parents or her friends: she was furious and attempted to commit the greatest injuries. This state sometimes continued for two, three, eight, or fifteen days; she would then feel most agonizing pains at the epigastrium, and about the heart. These pains, which were concentrated at the precordial region (the pit of the stomach), which she could not support without the strength communicated to her by her lover, were, as she said, caused by her parents and her

friends—although they were several leagues distant—or by those who attended her.

Any great appearance of compulsion or force overawed her; she would then turn pale, tremble, a flow of tears would terminate the attack.

This lady, reasonable under all other circumstances, worked; was perfectly capable of managing her domestic arrangements! she did justice to her husband's merit, and to her parents' affection: but she could not see the former nor live with the latter. This state was not brought on in her by any previous derangement of health. The paroxysms of fury sometimes took place at the period of menstruation, but not always. Her appetite was capricious, and all her actions participated in the disorder of her delirious passion. She slept but little; her slumber was disturbed by dreams and nightmare. She had frequent fits of watchfulness; and when she did not sleep, she walked about, talked to herself, and sung. This state of things continued for many years. A year's course of treatment, isolation, tepid and cold baths, douches, anti-spasmodics,—both externally and internally,—nothing could restore her to reason.* The physicians who report these two cases do not say whether the patients were guilty of secret breaches of the vows of modesty; more than one fact, however, makes us think this to be the case with the former.

* Dictionary of Medical Science.—Article Erotomaine, by Dr. Peersal.

LETTER XXI.

CAN the young girl who is a victim to secret pernicious habits, know anything of the charms of friendship? Such is the question I propose to examine in this letter, but I ought first to justify women against some reproaches which have been directed against them with regard to this noble affection.

It has been asserted that it has only been given to your sex to experience the sentiment of love, and not that of friendship. Nature, reason, history, all prove that such a maxim is a most unjust assertion. What! a sentiment, the most honorable and the most delicious, to be refused to the heart of woman; she alone to be incapable either of inspiring it or enjoying it! A woman even has repeated this assertion; and, what is almost inconceivable, this lady has written a treatise on friendship, which, in the judgment of connoisseurs, is superior to all the treatises written on the same subject by men,—whom she nevertheless assures to be the only heroes of friendship. No, this is not credible: when a woman is reared in the bosom of her family, like a plant amidst the parterre which gave it birth, innocent and pure, entirely exempt from all vice; in a word, as Delille remarks:

"And still stamped with the image of Divinity,'

there is no delicate or exquisite feeling, whose happy seed may not be dropped in her heart.

A woman, I repeat, assures us that women are not capable of friendship; and yet this same

woman gives us a better account of friendship, teaches us better all its secrets and its laws, in an excellent treatise, than any man has yet done. How are we to explain this? And yet the same thing ought to be true of the heart and feelings, as of colors; they must be felt to be expressed, just as we must see to be enabled to paint. But it is absolutely impossible for any work of the human mind to be perfect, and the sentence of the Marchioness of Lambert against her sex is, doubtless, the mark of humanity which is imprinted on her chef-d'œuvre. "Women," says she in it, "have the misfortune to be incapable of relying upon friendship among themselves; the faults with which they are fitted form an almost insurmountable obstacle to it."

In the first place do we find so many real friends among men themselves? Aristotle, who ought to know them, since he has written treatises on morals and politics, observes, "Oh, my friends! There are no friends!" As to their duration, are there no friendships among men which are broken? or, do we not on the contrary rather see that this is, unfortunately, a most common occurrence?

"The faults with which women are filled are almost insurmountable obstacles to the duration of friendship amongst them." Are they, then, more filled with faults than men? And what are the obstacles opposed to their eternal friendship? This same female writer imagines she has discovered them in those faults which, like envy, break off any close connection? But how long is it since envy ceased to actuate men? will they pause before a holy and tender friendship? will they fear to wound it? Ah! such examples may have occurred, may still occur. I believe in friendship but

how many men have really tasted and followed its laws, even unto death?

"Woman" still continues in her moment of error—the Marchioness of Lambert (for I will not dissimulate, but desire to your sex all your titles to friendship), "women unite from necessity, and never from taste." And let me ask again what most frequently unites men, the immense majority of men, if it be not ambition, interest, or their own safety. Is their mutual taste, that taste which is said to be wanting to women, for the fountain of constant friendship—is it anything else than the attraction of gratified vanity; but the identity of taste for some art or science; and lastly but the same desire, as is said of your sex, to escape often from solitude and ennui.

I do not wish by these reflections, to underrate men, but to establish the fact, that they are not more exempt from those failings which destroy friendship than are women, and that of two things, one is true; either friendship never exists, or that women are as capable of enjoying its delights among themselves as men.

Observe, dear reader, that in refusing this feeling to woman, we are establishing it as a fact that they can be neither good sisters, good relations, nor even grateful for what ought to constitute amongst women a perfect friendship; if they cannot experience it for a sister, a relation, or a benefactress, for whom they entertain all that love which ordinarily are attached to these different titles These are surely assertions whose truth you will never admit.

Again, although to reason correctly, is under all circumstances an excellent method of judging correctly; yet, facts when they are faithfully related,

constitute the best of all judgment. In the subject of friendship, here is the creed of another authoress, as talented, and as celebrated, the Countess of Beauharnais.

"Life indeed is sad and drear,
When friendship's voice we never hear,
On rank and wealth what joys attend?
They ne'er can buy a faithful friend."

The more severe this reproach made against your sex, the more persuaded I am of its injustice; the less avaricious ought I to be of proofs to demonstrate its falsehood. And so I shall present you with a number of incontestible ones.

Madame de Boufflers, the mother of the chevalier of that name, wrote to the Marchioness of Chatelet, and recalled to her recollection the verses in which Voltaire, praising her amiability, her wit, her talents, her knowledge, told her that every thing pleased him, every thing was agreeable to his vast genius:

"Books, trinkets, compasses, trifles,
Verses, diamonds," &c. &c.

The Marchioness who looked upon friendship, as far above science and diamonds, thus replied:—

"Alas you've forgotten
In all that you've told
Friendship, more precious
Than science or gold."

Had I been desirous of following out chronological order, as is usually done when erudite works are penned I should first have allowed to plead their cause, those females who have preceded the latter, but chronological order is of little importance in this

place, and this slight digression will only prove to you how much facts press on us when it is a question of eulogising your sex for their virtues or feelings.

I therefore ask pardon of Madame de Sevigny who well deserves to be first heard, since I do not deem it necessary to select my examples from ages more remote than that in which she flourished, and I hasten to let her explain herself. "I know," says she, "that there are a thousand things to say, a hundred things to be done, in order that those we love may not fancy it broken. I know that there exists an infinity of circumstances in which we make them suffer, and in which we might relieve their pains, if we always possessed those opinions and thoughts which we ought to have for all that appertains to the heart. Lastly, I can prove that there are a hundred methods of exhibiting friendship without declaring it, or by which we may tell by actions that we possess no friendship, although it contradicts the assertion."

Thus speaks Madame de Sevigny in the eulogium which gained the prize.

Let us leave to Madame de Sevigny all her glory; let us in no wise decrease the homage due to her; let us admire her wit, but still more her heart; nothing is more sublime than her affection. These are expressions repeated a thousand times, yet ever new, ever interesting, it is an imperishable eloquence. How much does every feeling, every passion in her create a lively impression! How in her do we behold the charms of friendship. We there see that candid and active affection, which is the true foundation of love, because it is deprived of all self-love, and only considers the happiness of others. Let us only call those true friends, who

yielding up every thing to the object of their affection, only seek its happiness and utility. This constant and animating feeling enlightens them as to the true interest of those whom they love, and causes them often to sacrifice their dearest tasks, and feelings. Ingenious in seeking the means of obliging, ardent in following them out, if the power is wanting to them, they invite, exhort, solicit; and if they be condemned to inaction, what expression do they not give to their regrets and wishes.

Permit me to ask you, whether it would be possible for men to feel more strongly the duties of friendship, to carry it to a greater extreme; are there many in fact, who would go so far. For myself, I believe it almost beyond their capacity, their hearts appear to me to be with difficulty touched by such tender sentiments. This is not the nature of man, it is too hard for that; it is only the tender and delicate organization of woman, which can give to any being, the power of feeling, in such an exquisite manner, and it would assuredly be doing the greatest injury to the lovely soul of the woman I have just named, to suppose that they had only in view individuals of the other sex when they expressed such noble sentiments.

I should never finish my task were I to recall all the delicious mysteries of friendship unveiled by women. I allow that men may go far in such a country, but I am persuaded that women alone can discover all in it.

It has been asserted that envy was an obstacle to the existence of friendship in women. The following passage from the memoirs of Madame de Stael, is a sufficient answer to this charge. In it she relates, while yet she was only Mademoiselle de

Launay, to the prior of St. Louis at Rouen, all her feelings for Mademoiselle de Sillery:—

"No thought presented itself to my mind which I did not communicate to her. I loved her as I loved myself, nay, more indeed than I loved myself, at least, so it appeared to me. I would have suffered any evil designed for her, if it would have relieved her. At length, I actually went so far as to take an aversion to several persons because they appeared to have more esteem and friendship for me than for her."—Is this envy?

Another question has been raised—it has been asked if friendship could exist between persons of opposite sex. It appears to me, that their trouble of putting this question might have been spared if a little reflection had been made on the matter.

Independently of the numberless proofs of the possibility of the existence of such a friendship which are unknown to the world in general—for friendship seldom troubles itself by seeking renown—have not the merits and the fame of many persons, presented us with numerous examples thereof. The names of Madame de Sevigne and the Duke of Rochefoucault, of Madame de la Fayette and Cardinal Retz, of Mesdames Evrard, De la Sabliere, and our immortal fabulist, loudly speak in favor of this kind of friendship. The Marchioness of Lambert, a worthy historian of this lovely sentiment, generally speaks of its charms in reference to persons of opposite sexes.

Many letters of Madame de Sevigne are filled with the grief with which she was overwhelmed at the death of the duke, her friend: and Madame de Sevigne was a virtuous woman in the strict sense of that term.

Philocletus, in Ædipus, speaking of Hercules, says:

"The friendship of a great man, is a blessing from the gods."

Mademoiselle Montpensier and Madame de la Fayette, Madame Evrard and Madame de la Sabliere, have proved—the two first to the poet Segrais, the two second to their fabulist (so they call La Fontaine), that it would not have been too presumptive of them to have applied these words of Philocletus, and that heaven might in its benevolence also grant the friendship of women.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier attached to herself in the capacity of her attendant gentleman, the poet Segrais; he lived in her house twenty-four years, during which time she overwhelmed him with marks of esteem, of confidence, and friendship. This princess having projected an union with Count Lauzon, and Segrais having offered her some advice on the matter which was not accepted, deemed it his duty to retire from her house. The friendship of an estimable woman, Madame de la Fayette, procured for him another useful and agreeable retreat.

Do you know the much celebrated reply of La Fontaine, and which perhaps was the means of rendering the names of La Sabliere and Evrard immortal? It may be called the "Reply of Friendship," so much is it characteristic of its simplicity, its frankness, and never-swerving reliance.

Death had just deprived the witty fabulist of the friendship of the first of these two females, and of all the resources he had derived from her, and which his indolence and carelessness had rendered indispensable. He went towards the house of the second, who, having met him, said to him— "I have just heard of the misfortune which has occurred to you: and I was coming to beg of you to take up

your abode with me." "I was coming," replied La Fontaine.

If all this does not prove sufficiently that the purest friendship, and that most worthy of praise, may exist between persons of different sexes, I should like to know what truth can ever be proved.

But now let us see what its most eloquent priestess says on this subject. "It is both rare and difficult," observes she, "but it is friendship which possesses the most charms. It is more difficult, because it requires more virtue and discretion. Women who only think of, and understand ordinary love, are not worthy of it; and the men who only seek another kind of gratification in women, and who imagine that they do not possess any amiable qualities of heart and mind, and are consequently only attracted by beauty, are not fit for the friendship of which I speak. It is necessary to endeavor to be united by virtue and personal merit. Sometimes such attachments begin in love and end in friendship. When women are faithful to the virtue of their sex, friendship being the recompense of virtuous love, they flatter themselves in attaining to it. When women sacrifice their duty to their love, and offer to you in exchange the charms and feelings of friendship; when, besides, you find in them the same merit as exists in men, can you do better than to accept their friendship? It is certain, that of all unions this is the most delightful. There is always a degree of vivacity which is never found among persons of the same sex."

To this point I listen with entire confidence to the lessons of the amiable priestess of friendship, but it is here that I cease to follow her—it is here that I cease to believe her; for it is in this place that I find the failing which is to be discovered in

all human productions, even the most exquisite, that is to say, it is here that she asserts that women cannot enjoy among themselves the delights of friendship. I will not repeat her words here, since I have discussed them in the course of this letter, and I flatter myself that I have completely absolved your sex from them; I therefore purposely omit them, and I give all credit to the woman who ought to be so worthy of the feeling which she describes so well. She thus continues, with all the justice, and all her usual delicacy of mind:—"When their hearts are not occupied or torn by passion, their friendship is tender and touching to behold. It is women alone who know how to extract from virtuous feeling all that is to be derived therefrom. Men speak to the mind, women to the heart. And further, as Nature has established certain connections and ties between the individuals of different sexes, everything is prepared for friendship. The works of Nature are ever the most perfect; those in which she does not take a prominent part, are less agreeable. The friendship of which I speak is recognized as her work. Those secret ties, that sympathy, that touching fascination which cannot be resisted, are all found therein. So desirable a blessing is ever the reward of merit, but we must be on our guard against ourselves, lest a virtue should ultimately be converted into a furious passion."

Though women really deserve that on this subject entire homage should be rendered to them, an estimable writer (Thomas) has at least been more just towards women than the philosophers who preceded him, since he says: "It may be perhaps necessary to desire a man as your friend on all great

occasions, but, for daily happiness, one must desire the friendship of a woman."

In this place I would have you remark, that in refusing this second species of friendship to women, it will be a natural consequence to assert that, after a little time, during which they have enjoyed the happiness of the most durable of all passions, husband and wife only feel towards each other the greatest indifference; this is an absurdity. The greatest part of married life, on the contrary, is an enjoyment of friendship; it is the best and most effective recompense for virtuous love; and women should make every effort to merit this reward. For friendship's reign is longer than that of love; it consoles for the loss of the latter, and assures us that at least we are still loved.

It is impossible better to express this truth than has been done by the Marchioness historian of friendship: and I shall be careful not to omit her evidence in this place: "The more we advance in life, the more do we feel our need of friendship. In proportion as the reason becomes matured, the mind increases in delicacy of feeling and the heart is purified, the more necessary becomes this feeling."

In admitting, too, the above principle, it must be asserted that friendship cannot exist between a brother and sister. Such an assertion is equally disgusting from its falsehood as from its immorality; nd affecting examples of this friendship can readiy be collected to give the lie thereunto.

Yes, the hearts of women are constituted to feel and nourish the tender sentiments of love, just as the brain is formed to think, to conceive, and to

remember past events; as the ear is made to be affected by agreeable or unpleasant sounds. But friendship is no stranger to it—it cannot be; for in both cases it is a matter of loving, cherishing, and feeling with tenderness and without bounds.

But as friendship is one of the noblest feelings one of the most grand privileges of humanity, can only be found in connection with noble souls of merit and virtue united, to which cause we are to attribute the rarity of friendship in all ages of the world. In fact, to possess true friends needs the most complete and nice power of discrimination in selecting them, a natural gift to cherish them with the most perfect unselfishness, all the natural qualities necessary to keep them, an insurmountable courage to defend them when they are unjustly accused; and, when they are so justly, still to excuse them without approving their error (for who of us never falls?), a delicate and unlimited liberality in relieving them without afflicting them, intelligence, understanding, and complacency, and modesty to advise and instruct them, without wounding their pride, when they are in error, or less talented than oneself.

The Memoirs of Madame de Stael record the name of a female who was this perfect model. After having stated in the most interesting manner a host of good qualities with which Madame de Bussy, her friend, was gifted, Madame de Stael thus continues:—

"But that which more than all else attached her to her friends was, that she possessed that true and perfect friendship so often deemed but a vain idea. The confidence she inspired was such as one feels for oneself, and willingly would they confess to her what they would not have con-

fesse" to themselves. The affectionate interest which she always seemed to feel, her great attention to what was said to her, penetrated the very depths of the heart. The wisdom of her advice, her manner of inculcating it, added real utility to the charms of that confidence reposed in her."

The feeling which I have just described to you and which requires the union of the noblest qualities in those who experience it, is extremely appropriate in turning my attention from those unfortunates who only have a penchant for a frightful vice, and thus I have lost sight of them for some time; but there is so little connection between them and those individuals who devote themselves to delicate and sublime friendship, that it was difficult not to forget them. In fact, what community is there between them and this virtue? Where could they obtain such virtues and such merit? How could they fulfil such sweet and noble duties? A true friend is a being who feels, who thinks, who acts from excellent motives; he is a perfect philosopher. True friendship can only spring from the most happy nature or from the most pure philosophy. What a distance from that happy situation in which these two conditions place both the heart and the mind, is that ignoble and most polluting of all passions!

Virtue and taste have given rise to friendships whose memorial has descended even to us. In friendship the purest morals are necessary: you will lose too much in risking an union with an individual of badly regulated morals. The first merit you must seek for in a friend is virtue:* it is this that assures us he is capable of friendship,

* Nec sine virtute amicitia esse ullo pato potest (Cicero de Amicitia cap. 6)

and is worthy of it. Hope nothing from your connections as long as they have not this foundation."

Thus do we read in the "Treatise on Friendship." And yet, is there a single word in these precepts which can be spoken of these sad lovers of solitude? Are they virtuous?

If a frightful habit can drive from the heart all the amiable and honorable feelings, and substitute for them only those which excite our disgust or pity; if, as we have seen, it can alter human nature, to such an extent as not to allow a tear for filial piety to be shed over the loss of the most beloved parents; to such an extent as to substitute for conjugal love, not merely indifference, but absolute aversion, how could friendship, with all its delights and charms, reign in the heart!

It is really difficult to relate, without being accused of exaggeration, such misfortunes, such evils; the imagination itself recoils before such pictures; they are too hideous for me, in this place, to increase their number; I will confine myself, therefore, to the following. I open the letters published at Paris by Dr. Doussin Dubreuil, and there I read these words:—

"Giving myself up solely to this passion, every thing around me was a burthen to me. I avoided every connection which could take me from it, my dearest friends had become odious to me; according to the definition of a friend by an ancient philosopher, it is one soul living in two bodies."*

* An expression of Aristotle, equivalent to that of Pythagoras, on the same subject,—"Our friend is but another self; a paraphrase in many ways. When I am with my friend, we are no longer two, etc., etc." And Montaigne appears to have meant the same thing when he says:—"When I am asked whence comes that joy, that ease that repose which I feel when I see my friend, it is because it is he—because it is myself;—that's all I can say."

Thus then, it is but too true, when we observe all the healthy functions of the body altered; all the charms of beauty vanish under the dominion of this solitary passion, we in the same way see all noble feelings disappear likewise, under its mortal influence. We must not, therefore, seek among its victims heroines of friendship, filial piety, conjugal affection or maternal love.

Vainly on the marriage-day, by the side of love, friendship is promised and reserved for old age. Vainly do love and friendship together swear and make up the happiness of life. If vice is first there, all else is hopeless.*

LETTER XXIII.

You will remember, doubtless, the verses in which a lady says on the subject of friendship, "that we are nothing without the heart;" she is in the right—but we are also nothing if a wise rule over ourselves does not render us worthy of our own esteem as well as that of others. "A beautiful woman is, as has often been affirmed, the chef-d'œuvre of nature, but this noble work is unfinished" says the author of very excellent advice to women, in a little treatise entitled, "The Friend of Women;" if

* The same axiom may be established in morality as in medicine—'Of two simultaneous passions, the most powerful obscures the weakest.'

there is anything wanting in the soul, and it is to this consideration that the ambition of women should be directed. When beauty is added to solid merit, it may be said to honor humanity, virtue renders a woman more lovely, while beauty in its turn adds a new lustre to virtue, which is in a measure personified and rendered visible with all her charms in an amiable and wise woman."

This alliance appears to exist so naturally, these charms are so well suited to virtue, that they are almost always mistaken for her. How unfortunate, when beauty presents itself alone! What amiable feelings their union would have inspired, and of which honor and reason prevent us having any conception.

And yet, if persons by their actions leave themselves so little self-esteem, if they know themselves to possess so little virtue that they dare not even name themselves, what consideration can they expect from others. For on all occasions, that these unfortunate victims are compelled to demand aid, and to explain the cause of their sufferings to physicians, they almost always do it by letters, which they retain power to write and without exposing their names.

But whither am I carried in my advice? What is there strange in your being neither esteemed nor respected? These are not the only feelings to which you have a right; you ought also to be honored and cherished—cherished! this word recals to you all the tenderness of your parents for you. What grief, what tears, if it be decreed that a painful death—young yet———, but no—this will not be your fate, your own wisdom will long preserve you to their love.

It has been also said that a beautiful but viciou

woman is a monster, and nothing is more true. She is no chef-d'œvre of nature, since she brings into alliance things most completely at variance—personal beauty with mental ugliness. All that is most fitted to charm with all that is abject. If we meet with such a woman she cannot deserve our admiration. We can only consider her as a lovely plant, or a beautiful vase, escaped from the hands of the graces, which, in lieu of being filled with exquisite perfumes, only encloses a dangerous poison.

The honest man, whose first impressions are generally favorable, seeks her; but if she be such as to merit the title of monster, in the sense I have just spoken it; that is to say, if she have only beauty without manners, she soon discovers that the most fascinating charms, even if they be united to the gifts of high birth and wit, are far from constituting what is called solid merit, or from attracting consideration.

There was anciently, at Rome, two temples, so disposed that it was necessary to pass through the first to arrive at the second; the first was dedicated to virtue, the second to honor. In this we can see the actuating motives of their founders; they desired to teach the lesson that there was no honor without virtue.

If the assertion of Bruyere has been considered true, up to a certain point, viz:—"Caprice is always close to beauty to serve as an antidote to her;"—that is to say, to prevent her too powerful effect, what must it be when we only meet in women with the most absolute insensibility—in temper, ugliness,* immoral conduct, which are

*Softness and grace of character appeared so indispensable to Plutarch for the happiness of persons united in marriage, that with-

almost always the result of vicious habits; in word, when we meet with women whom we can not esteem.

And yet it is indispensable to create esteem, if we wish to please. The esteem accorded to qualities which the interest of society has caused to be honored, carries with it a favorable prejudice towards those persons who are characterised by them. If we bear any esteem towards another, be assured that that person pleases in many ways. Individuals of delicate minds, more particularly, have as much need to esteem as to admire; it would be impossible for them to love without esteem. To love and not to esteem are two feelings which cannot be separated; is not the idea of the separate existence of these two sentiments repugnant to the mind? If it be true that we cannot long love a person who has only beauty without mental worth, we are likely to love less long a woman whom we cannot esteem. If we do not esteem a woman, be assured that no charms will be left her—be assured that she will even give us cause for dissatisfaction in many other ways; but a few short months and the feeble ties which attached us to her will soon have ceased to exist.

out them a woman can never trust to her wealth, the nobleness of her descent, nor her beauty, but must rely on all that most closely affects the heart of her husband; that is to say, in his reception, in her manners, and in her conversation; taking care that, as far as possible, nothing shall be unpleasant, disagreeable, or an injury to her husband; but that all should be pleasant, agreeable, and in accordance with his taste. For just as physicians dread more those fevers which are engendered by unseen causes, which are slow and gradual in their approach, than those which proceed from apparent and manifest causes, so there are often little quarrels and disturbances daily continued between husband and wife, of which strangers know and see nothing, which separates them and more completely destroys the happiness of their conjugal state than any other cause.—*Precepts on Marriage.*

But how different is she; how worthy, on the contrary, of praise and love is woman, whose lovely face, and her whole life, always in accordance with each other, had never exhibited but mildness, wisdom and innocence; on whose features and in whose eyes we can only read the purity and beauty of her soul. She speaks, she smiles, she moves; every thing inspires confidence and banishes suspicion. And how can it be otherwise if she be but a perfect assemblage for grace, chastity, candor, and nobleness. Titus might indeed say of such a woman

"Pleasing without art—
Beauty, glory, virtue—I find all there.*

Verily, such a woman is nature's chef-d'œuvre what honest heart would not strive for the possession of such supreme happiness. If we compare such a lovely life with that of the woman whom we cannot esteem, it is most truly, the lovely shining day in a delicious country compared to a most stormy day, making of the same country a field of desolation and wretchedness.†

"King Philip," says Plutarch, "loved a Thessalian woman who was believed to have bewitched and charmed him with sorceries; for this cause his queen Olympias contrived to get her into her hands; but when she had gazed upon her and considered her thoroughly, as she was beautiful and graceful, and as her discourse proved that she was well educated and of noble extraction, 'away,' she said, 'with all these calumnies, for I feel that the charms

* Racine—Tragedy of Berenice.—Act II. scene 2d.
† Similie used by Rousseau and Zimmerman, quoted in the preceding letters.

you use are in yourself.'" 'It is therefore," adds this great moralist, "an inherent knowledge that could teach a legitimately married woman that it was grace, virtue, and tenderness only that could win the love of her husband."

I have said but a little while since, that when even a vicious woman unites in her own person the seductive charms of beauty with those of the mind she cannot expect any consideration if she do not conciliate esteem. Hence are many examples out of a much larger number that I could have printed.

History and literature have given you a knowledge of Sappho, born at Lesbos, an island in the Ægean Sea in Greece. She is reputed not to possess the gift of beauty, but she was endowed with so great a genius, and so rare a talent for poetical composition, that the Greeks, who were the most civilized nation on the earth, surnamed her the tenth muse;* she must, therefore, have acquired the greatest esteem and respect. And yet she contracted a mad passion for Phaon, a young Lesbian; she was not beloved of him, knew not how to conquer her passion, nourished it rather than endeavored to fight against it. And at length, yielding to her despair, she threw herself from a rock into the sea, leaving behind her but the reputation of a woman of very common morality.

"———From Leucadia's promontory
Flung herself headlong for the Lesbian boy.
(Ungrateful he to work her such annoy.)
But time hath, as in sad requital, given
A branch of laurel to her: and some bard
Swears that a heathen god or goddess gave
Her swan-like wings wherewith to fly to heaven.
And now at times, when gloomy tempests roar
Along the Adriatic, in the wave

* Voyage of Anacharsis.

She dips her plumes, and on the wat'ry shore
Sings, as the love-crazed Sappho sung of yore.'"*

The Empress Julia, wife of Septimus Severus, placed in even more favorable circumstances for obtaining true glory, did not succeed better.

Born in Syria, daughter of a Priest of the Sun, she had received from nature a most transcendent mind. "As a stateswoman," says Thomas, "she obtained the confidence of her husband, who, though he did not love her, still governed by her advice. She cultivated literature, passed her whole life in acquiring knowledge, and divided her time between pleasure and business. Having men of knowledge in her cabinet, and the most amiable people of Rome in her palace, engaged in carrying out the greatest projects for her throne, she obtained a somewhat well-merited celebrity. Under the reign of her son, she had the same influence as under her husband. But though she had received so many great gifts, yet as she did not possess that which should be the first of her sex, and that her philosophy did not bring with it morality, she was more boasted of than respected; and her memory is more brilliant than venerated.†

A lady of distinguished birth brought her two daughters to Ninon de Lenclos; her visit was finished, and she was about to take her departure; Ninon, taking her on one side, said to her:—"Madame, you have done me much honor in bringing to me your daughters; but their birth, their fortune, and their beauty entitle them to honorable and advantageous connections; in coming to me they may do themselves injury."—

* Barry Cornwall,
† Essay on the Character, Manners, and Mental Qualifications of Woman.

And yet Ninon had exhibited proofs of a rare probity. She was possessed of as much elevation of soul as wit and beauty. She often collected around her the greatest men of the age; the Condes, the Turennes, Vivonne, Villarceaux, Moliere, La Fontaine, etc. Voltaire was presented to her when very young. But she did not possess the proper morality of her sex. The generous remark which she made to the lady who had brought her daughters, proves she knew how important, and what a delicate thing, is the reputation of women, although she had taken but little care of her own; and it is with reason that Madame de Maintenon says in one of her letters,—"nothing requires more skill to preserve an irreproachable character." All the policy of women, indeed, appears to me contained in these few words. It may be replied in favor of Ninon, that she only made this observation to this lady because her house was frequented by a great number of men. But did not Mesdames Sevigne, De la Fayette, La Sabliere, also admit into their social circles Rochefoucault, La Fare, La Fontaine, Racine, and many other most amiable men; and yet would they have anticipated that young girls must be ruined by merely being presented to them?—No, certainly not. And you would neither be compromised or thought little of in the society of men who were distinguished for morality.

It is impossible to deny it; Ninon felt truly that her own morals could not merit esteem; and that the thousand amiable qualities which she did possess could not make up for that failing.†

It is said that the Marchioness of Lambert had this celebrated woman present in her mind when she said to her daughter, in the little treatise entitled "Advice to My Daughter,"—"You have two inflexible tribunals before whom you must constantly appear—Conscience and the World. You may escape the world, but you will not escape your conscience: to yourself you owe the testimony of your honor."

Young people, then, cannot attach themselves too strongly to chastity, which gives them the right of self-esteem, which renders them so amiable, which procures for them the highest consideration; and, on the contrary, avoid all that even for a moment would expose their morals to corruption. Chastity is secret modesty; forgetfulness of it leads to that of all modesty; and those men whose judgment from the earliest ages has had the greatest weight, have ever spoken of it as the most honorable and sacred thing. Aristotle, Galen, Plutarch, Valeriola, who were all philosophers, historians, or physicians, all agree in saying, that where it exists in young men, it appears to indicate a particularly honorable feeling; that it is a proof of a nature full of promise for the future; others call it the armament of life; and Cicero, the guardian of all the virtues.

A king of France said, that if honor was banished from all the rest of the earth, it ought to be found in the heart of kings. It appears to me that it may also be said, "If chastity could aban

.lon the rest of the earth, it ought to be most surely discovered among women.* It must also be allowed, that if among men the point of honor consists in valor and probity, it consists among women in decency and chastity.

But I pause here; I have spoken enough of esteem to persons to whom it will be accorded in the highest degree, and of decency, to decency itself.

* I cannot avoid, in this place recording a most remarkable attachment to modesty, exceedingly honorable to the female character. I was called, in 1815, to a young girl attacked with gastritis, which had been preceded by a sudden cessation of the flow of milk. The disease advanced so rapidly towards an unfavorable termination, notwithstanding all the prudence and zeal with which it was combatted by myself and colleagues, that in a very few days the patient could not rise or be raised; black and dry tongue came on, and she had no longer strength to open her eyes or put out her tongue. She lay on her back, made no reply to any one, appeared to hear nothing; the sensibility of the skin was almost extinguished. With the intention of rousing her, and of recalling life—so ready to escape—by exciting the last sparks which might yet remain, I advised the application of rapidly acting blisters on the legs, the inside of the thighs, and the soles of the feet. They were first placed on the legs, the patient appeared utterly indifferent to them; they produced no appreciable effect. We prepared to place fresh ones on the second region to which I have above alluded, namely, the thighs: the body-linen which covered them was raised, in order that the blistering plasters might be applied.—How was I struck with astonishment! This patient, who for many days appeared to hear nothing, who had not the power to raise her eyelids, who constantly remained in one position, in whom even the skin only retained a semi-vitality—under the action of the rubefacients which were brought into contact with it,—this patient contracted her fingers immediately over that part of her clothing on which they were resting, held it fast, opposed several times her weak hand to those which desired to call her back to life. This most unexpected circumstance recalled hope to our hearts; we perceived, with joy, these feeble movements of our patient, the only ones she had exhibited for many days: we took every precaution relative to the fear she thus silently expressed, and yet we were compelled to carry out the plan of treatment, in the hope of saving her. But we deceived ourselves; there absolutely remained in this interesting state, nothing but the feeling of modesty; that alone had outlived all others: the fresh blisters found no vital spark to rally; when removed, a very slight redness only of the skin had been produced. This was in the evening; the next day, at dawn, the patient was no more.

LETTER XXIV.

Religion, no less than reason, condemns the habits of solitudinarians. She requires the constant exercise of all the virtues. The habits spoken of are but the results of the most horrible and condemnable weaknesses.

Religion requires of every one to preserve, as far as depends on ourselves, the gift of life which has been made to us by the Author of Nature. When it occurs that a young person, dying from a perseverance in these vicious habits, leaves her friends to deplore her death, brought on by her own free will, I fancy I hear the Author of Nature, when this unfortunate girl appears at his tribunal, ask of her what had become of the innocence and purity with which He had adorned her, as well as with the charms which he had been willing to give her with so much munificence?

All things, even to her funeral obsequies, appear to speak loudly of the penalty reserved for such habits; not that we need add to the vengeance of Nature—she has been severe enough already; but truth appears to interdict the crown of lilies and white roses always destined for the tomb of virginity. We may not even depose upon her last resting place the branch of myrtle destined for the tomb of the youthful bride—for she has never known marriage. A gloomy scabiuo growing beside it as though out of pity, will announce perhaps that a single tear may be shed for her.

Happy the girl who is truly pious and truly wise the future will smile on her, even as the present

LETTER XXV.

The youthful solitudinarian, then, knows no happiness. Every day does she wander farther from it. Once deprived of all the gifts of Nature—when once there is no return to cure nor to the restraint of the will, and there is a limit to both—how can she be happy? Can it be in making herself the pride and ornament of her family? No! for she has neither wealth, beauty, mental accomplishments, nor virtue. Can it be by exemplary piety? She possesses not sufficient to sacrifice the weakness so dangerous to herself. Her vice is the god which entirely occupies her thoughts. Can it be by a brilliant alliance? What man of worth would deign to seek her, ill and bowed down by infirmities? Is it reserved to her to give birth to lovely children? No! for if, before she falls a sacrifice to her fatal passion, a husband should demand of her the happiness of becoming a father, he will in all probability but have the misery of being so, a misery which she must also feel, for the same day will shine upon the birth and the sad destiny of her children—too weak to struggle against the new elements amidst which they will henceforth have to struggle, or at least to live exempt from infirmities.*

* It is well known that the fundamental idea of the system of Brown, that everything in Nature is exciting, physiologically speaking; that life is but the product of the excitation of living beings by the matter amidst which they exist: from which he was inclined to believe, that doubtless there was sometimes a want, sometimes an excess of excitation, from which sprung all disease; a sublime conception, but one to which the author, not knowing how to preserve the just medium, did not give that impulse which he might have done. Nevertheless, that very judicious observer, M. Chaussier, has lately made some observations in the Hospital La Maternite, to which he

What signs, as I have already told you, had, it is true, given fear to your parents (you who are so dear to them) that you might one day be reduced to such a state of misery. But was not this fear but the result of error? On the contrary, you will in your turn fulfill with all that satisfaction that follows them, the duties of a loving and watchful mother.

"Ere yet her child has drawn its earliest breath,
A mother's love begins—it glows till death;
Lives before life, with death not dies, but seems
The very substance of immortal dreams."

But what evils would have followed such a fault! How dearly would it have cost you! What other maternal pleasures do not exist, which you could not have tasted! To the gift of life which you would have made to your child, how could you have added that of a strengthening and salutary nourishment? What bosom, what proper milk could you have offered him, what strength could you have communicated to him, who were yourself always

is physician, which may throw much light upon the ideas of Brown, particularly relative to newly-born children. This learned professor has remarked, that of those children who die a short time after their birth, the greater number die of peripneumonia, occasioned by the novel impression of the air on their lungs, too delicate not to be affected, whatever precautions may be taken in this respect.

Hippocrates, or the author of the book "On the Seventh Month of Pregnancy," well observes that the greater number of children who are born at this age do not live; because, not being sufficiently developed nor sufficiently strong, they suffer more than others from the change in passing into the air, and that they have yet to suffer the evil of forty days, which kills many of those born at the proper period. The author of the same book also remarks, that at eight months finishes an inflammatory state both of mother and child. But the author of the "Coaques" also says, in his appendix to the eleventh volume, that they do not suffer from the pleurisy, pneumonia, and other maladies, before the age of puberty, and that they need not be feared before that period. Truth and error have both their parts in these assertions. The learned professor whom I have just named has judged the question.

suffering? Whilst we observe virtuous mothers acquire, during lactation, charms which they did not possess before,* as though Nature had reserved them to make to them one day the amiable and just recompense for their excellent conduct and tenderness. Under such an error, you could not have poured out your love for your offspring in tender caresses; without virtue or merit of your own. how could you have brought them up? Finally, if nothing of this kind could have destroyed in you the feelings of a good mother, of a good wife, you would have been indeed to be pitied, since the very means of accomplishment was denied you.

Not only would you have deprived, by your crime, and by the destruction of your health, these innocent objects of your life, from long enjoying the blessing of life; but you yourself, already bearing in your bosom a disease of your lungs, death, pale death marching with you to the temple of Hymen, beneath pompous habits, to the torch of this god, to this garland so flattering to the hearts of mothers, would have added his miserable symptoms; and in despair, having scarcely the time to press you to his arms, your husband, his eyes filled with tears, his hands still clasping the flowers intended for quite another use, your husband, your unhappy husband, would have been compelled to exclaim over your tomb, his breast heaving with sighs, his eyes turned towards heaven—

"I thought to sing a song of joy,
But all my joy is flown;
Thus does the biting blast destroy,
The rose too early blown.
It loads the air with odorous breath,
Beneath the cheering sun;

* Hugues Smith "Guide to Mothers."

But night's cold winds assure its death,
When this bright course is run."*

But this mournful hymn, though well worthy of you, will not yet be heard; nuptials which will be celebrated under happier auspices, where reason, the graces, and happiness will for ever bind Hymen and Love with bands of flowers; delicious nuptials await you; your husband, like Pliny, will write to the authors of your mutual felicity, that is to say, from the parents from whom he will have received you— "We thank you—I, that she is my wife; she, that I am her husband; both, that you have united two persons formed for one another."† Your husband too, will never have experienced from you any other grief than that of having lost you; if, after a long wedded life you go first to await him in eternity.

But if those, who like you, have been so favored by Nature; have nevertheless, need of so much wisdom and good qualities, both of head and heart, how much ought they who appear, on the contrary, to have been forgotten; to be, so to speak, orphans of Nature, ought they not to endeavor to obtain from constant watchfulness those charms and those means of pleasing which have been refused them.

Socrates was accustomed to advise those young men who gazed at themselves in mirrors, if they were ugly, to alter that by virtue; and, if they were handsome, not to soil their beauty by vice "And in the same way it would be honest," says Plutarch, "if the married woman, when she holds her mirror in her hand would thus speak to her

* Grisset.—Epistle to a lady to console her for the loss of a pious daughter.

† Pliny the younger to his aunt, Letter 19. Book IV

self if she be plain— 'What should I have been if I had been wicked also?' And if she be handsome, 'What would have been my value if I had not been noble and chaste.' For if plainness of features is loved for its grace and good morals, that is much more honor than if it were for beauty."

"If friendship," as the Marchioness Lambert has said, "is the reward of virtuous love, marriage is, in general, if not always, the recompense of virtuous youth."

Esteem as frequently draws tighter the bonds of that happy social compact (marriage) as immorality breaks them. Daily may we see women, deprived of the advantages of beauty, inspire strong and double passions, because they deserve and give rise to esteem, and thus justify that lovely sentiment of one of the ancients, "Zeuxis, would have presented me with a perfect beauty, the masterpiece of his pencil, but I love better to contemplate the virtue of a woman.*

"You are not born without agreeable qualities," said the Marchioness Lambert to her daughter, "but you are not a beauty, this should induce you to make a provision of merit."

The women then who have not received grace, or wisdom, or charms of face, nor the precious fascinations of virtue and morality are as much to be pitied as those who are only beautiful.

It has been remarked that after a certain age, women live much longer than men.† Those who

* Xenophon, Aconom, Words of Ischomachus to Socrates.

† Although the village of Clery, in Clermontois, contained only twenty-five inhabitants, there were at the close of the year 1768, twelve persons in good health, who between them reckoned nine hundred and ninety three years two months. Of these there were three men and nine woman."—*Journal Encyclopediqut.*—See Richeraad's Phisology vol. 2.

escape the dangers which ordinarily accompany that age, may almost rely on about eighty years. Now, if a young girl whose morals become corrupt at eighteen or twenty years does not fall beneath them, or drag out a weary existence, overburdened with infirmities, for the sixty years which may belong to her she must thank destiny, for her laws have been changed for her.

I shall terminate all that I proposed to say to you in these letters on the dangers of vicious habits with that illustrious homage rendered to morality of all kind by the Presidentess de Brission, in her eulogium of Madame de Sevigne. "How easy is it," says the lady orator, "to be happy with simple manners, and how sweet it is to find happiness in the love of our duties, in study, in toil. Amiable sex! who pass your lives in a dissipation miscalled pleasure, and who destroy your sensibility by exhausting all frivolous amusements. Are you ignorant that there is a bright and sacred joy which ever satisfies the soul and never disgusts, the joy of self-esteem. Ah, if ever you shut yourself up in a circle of fruitless distractions or capricious opinions, you will lose your best rights and your empire will be destroyed. Aspire, rather, at the same time, to give a tone to manners, customs, and tastes. Observation, my young patient, will show you the excellence of such advice."*

* Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, that philosophic emperor, whose rank and power gave him so excellent an opportunity of appreciating what is called HAPPINESS of voluptuarians and real joys, which are the offspring of virtue and simplicity of manners. This prince, who was himself so virtuous, to whom the love and gratitude of the Roman people erected a temple, and of whom it was asserted that his friends divided his tablets at his death, whose leaves were regarded as precious and sacred relics. Marcus Aurelius conceived simplicity of manners and chastity, so important to happiness, that the finest axioms

LETTERS TO MADAME * * * *

LETTER I.

MADAME,—It is not sufficient, as you tell me, to have saved from a great danger one of your daugh-

relative thereunto, meet us every moment in his "Collection of Thoughts."

"The love of pleasure is often an illusion to us; but examine well, if we do not derive more satisfaction from nobility and tranquility of the soul, liberty, simplicity, and sanctity of manners."—Chapter 18.

"Ornament your soul with humility, chastity, and indifference to everything, neither good nor bad."—Chap. 27, par. 1.

"You will soon die, and you have not yet attained morality."—Ibid. par. 6.

"Silence your imagination, restrain your desires, avoid covetuousness, let your heart be master over itself."—Ibid. par. 12.

"Let no man be able to say of you that you are not humble nor honorable. Give the lie to whom shall entertain such an opinon; for all depends on yourself. Should any persuade you to renounce humility or should prevent you from being good, only muster up a strong resolution rather to renounce life than virtue; for reason permits nothing else."—Ibid. par. 16.

"Avoid thinking yourself superior to all law, like the vicious emperors; take care you are not wrecked; there are too many examples. Persist then in desiring to be humble, good, moral, grave, an enemy to foolish jesting, just, religious, benevolent, humane and firm in the practice of your duties; make constant efforts to become what philosophy will render you. Venerate the gods and be serviceable to men, life is short, the only advantage in living on earth is in living there in sanctity and being of utility to society."—Ibid. par. 22.

"Purify your imagination."—Par. 33.

"They slay, they massacre, they curse their emperors. Will this prevent me from preserving a pure heart, wisdom, moderation and justice; just as a stream of pure and clear water, which a passer-by chooses to curse, continues still to offer a salutary draught to him What would you do to be able to have within yourself an imperishable stream of happiness. You will have it if you ever cultivate in your heart a love of liberty, of benevolence, of simplicity and chastity."—Chap. 29, par. 11.

"Yes, what is respected most in this life is vanity, littleness, fashion. Faith, chastity, justice, truth, have quitted the earth and winged their way to heaven."—Chap. 33, par. 20.

ters; you ask me now, how you can for the future prevent a similar evil from attending your other children?

This solicitude is honorable to you. Nothing more merits praise than the attention of a mother to keep and to bring up her children in the way of virtue. No; it is not sufficient to love them: you must be vigilant; your love must shed a light upon your duty; and the latter, in its turn, must aid your love.

I shall on this subject give you all the advice in my power.

The vice to which we refer frequently commences at a very early age, that is to say, sometimes exists in young girls who would appear most unlikely subjects for it.

Many ages back, the father of medicine remarked that children were subject to a species of itching, or burning of the sexual organs. He even noticed it as one of the peculiarities of their age.*

I have heard it said by a very high physician, that imprudent nurses, who were ignorant of the danger of these unnatural irritations, had often declared to him that, taking advantage of this fact noticed by the father of medicine, they frequently had recourse to such practices to still the cries of their little charges.

Sabatier, whom Petit justly calls the Nestor of the French surgery, and to whom he had written, when he proposed to direct the attention of young people to the tomb of Monte Cindre, to entreat him

* After having detailed the affections of children of an early age, Hippocrates says, "Semioribus autem fientibus, tonsilla, verticuli in occipitio, intro luxationes, anhelationes calculorum generationes lumbrici rotundi, ascarides, serrucæ, trimores glandularum circa aures oblongi, *satyriasmi*, sturnæ et alia tubercula maxime vero prodicta.

to acquaint him with the observations with which his long career in the art of cure had furnished him, touching solitary habits. Sabatier, I say, replied thus, amongst other things, to Petit: "The most frequent and terrible results of this vice, that I have seen, have been curvatures and distortions of the spine. My opinion has always been regarded as erroneous, on account of the youth of the sufferers; I know, from many recent confessions, that many have given way to it before the sixth year of their age." And he adds, that a young girl of this age, presented him with a frightful example thereof. This young girl, twice cured by Doctor Moulot, and who at length fell a victim, was eight years old. (Preceding Letters.)

According to Doctor Campe, there died of this cause in the town of ——, a child of nine years, after having become also blind.

Tissot cites many very young victims.

Professor Moreau says, that he has had the opportunity of observing two little girls, of seven years, whom a culpable negligence had left to indulge in solitary excitement, whose frequency and excess ultimately brought on exhaustion and consumption.

Lastly, I have myself seen, in the children's hospital at Paris, in 1812, a little girl of seven years old, who gave herself up to this habit, to the greatest extent. She was deprived of nearly all her intellectual faculties.

Age, therefore, must not deceive you. There is no age, in fact, which may not present us with examples of this imprudence. It is frequently observed in adolescence, at the period when nature is laboring for the development of the body; and again, when secretly she is preparing the organs

of fecundity; and how pernicious it must be in these two last instances. We observe this in youth and the following ages.

Its first cause is in the natural constitution; it is truly in them a physical failing. With others, it is an acquired depravity; it is a fault converted into a habit, and, consequently, into a vice.

With others, again, this imprudence is the result of a disease more powerful than reason, and in this case, perhaps, only deserves the name of weakness.

Lastly, there are those with whom this excess becomes the most deplorable, as well as the most humiliating of all evils, by whom it has been spontaneously sought, or brought on by chance causes. In all cases, however, what is it but a species of madness? But, whatever name we may apply to this great evil, it is a matter of moment to prevent or stop it.

You have not waited for this advice, so much are you attracted by the liveliest motives; and you have made to yourself these austere reflections:—that the indifferent and careless mother, who neglects those things which one day may be of the greatest importance to the morality of her daughter, is the indirect cause of her destruction, and, if the expression may be allowed, makes the first attempt against her honor.

Alas! if filial piety does not recognise the necessity of respecting and cherishing their parents, when they are rather to be pitied than blamed, do not those, who by a culpable carelessness allow their children to fall into a vice which must ruin them, expose themselves one day to hear the despairing cry of their child, who perished from the crime:—"Woe to her who destroyed me! woe to her that destroyed me!"*

"How barbarous!" will another unfortunate more calmly exclaim; "the parents, the masters, the friends, who did not warn me of the danger to which this vice leads."*

It is so indisputable a fact, that the happiness of children depends on the attention paid to keep them in innocence and virtue; that we frequently hear in society, young persons, who were born to be estimable women, complain, and express the greatest regret at their neglect of knowledge and morality after the loss of the mother, who would, doubtless, have inculcated their laws, and exclaim that they lost all when they lost their mother. I have heard such a complaint. I have heard it from the mouth of a young lady, twenty-two years of age: "Alas! my mother, my poor mother; I lost all when I lost my mother!" exclaimed she; confessing by these words that, had Heaven preserved her, she would have watched over, and kept her from a crime which had in fact decided her doom.

Is it criminal thus to regret virtue? A mother, negligent on this point, is so much the more reprehensible since, generally, everything smites against the innocence of her daughter: her heart, her inexperience, and perfidious advice.

The loss of that gem of price, innocence, or virtue, always follows closely on the habit concerning which you seek my advice, that you may watch, like a worthy mother, over the purity of your children. It lights up in young persons the most imperious and tempestuous passions. It, in a measure, brings puberty in infancy, and what a future is promised by such a derangement of ages!

* Letters published by Dr. Douissin Dubreuil.

That of possessing no youth, as I have already shown; after having had no infancy, that of eternal celibacy, or the not less horrible destiny of being infallibly the victims of husbands who do not love them, for the reason that they are without charm or attraction for him. For, according to the very just reflections of a learned physician:

"In order that a woman shall be the true companion of man, that she may ensure to herself that loving empire over her family, which nature wills that she should have, it is necessary that all her faculties should have had the opportunity of maturing themselves by observation, by experience, and by reflection; it is necessary that by nature she should have gone over all that chain of impressions, whose entire forms, if I may so express myself, the true provision for the voyage of life. Without this, passing from a premature adolescence to an old age still more premature, there is scarcely any interval between the childishness of the first age and that of the last; and in both she is equally a stranger to the true blessings of life; she only knows its bitterness and sorrow."*

The natural arrival of puberty, on the contrary, leaves to the body both the time and means to perfect itself, to offer itself such as it should be found, and to bring with it, as a recompense, vigor, energy, and, so to speak, a *freshness of feeling* (another expression of the philosopher I have just quoted), from which the whole life obtains its happiness.

* Cabanis.—Connection between the physical and moral in man.

LETTER II.

The signs which would betray the habit of improper irritation in children of a tender age, have not, I believe, attracted much the attention of physicians, and the effects of such irritation on such young subjects is not generally known. The precaution of occasionally visiting these tender beings during their sleep, and the forbidding nurses or servants, to whom they are entrusted, to allow them, under any pretence, to irritate themselves in the manner of which I shall speak: such are nearly the only means for preventing in their origin a habit which, insignificant in appearance at first, may in the end produce the most melancholy consequences.

But the same is not the case in the more advanced stages of life; numberless signs announce the fatal habits; its results are as evident as they are terrible; and the difficulty of its cure demands much care and much art. Warm climates, a too liberal diet, an unoccupied life, and certain temperaments, predispose to it.

Peculiarity of constitution, the mode of life, and temperament, are the fields for all the passions. They there are sown, there they abound, there they develope with all their energy, or only show themselves there rarely or feebly, according to whether their soil is or is not propitious.

The effects of this natural law may in truth be advantageously modified by education, religion, habit and the example of virtue, and by a proper mode of living, but this law exists none the less.

Three species of temperament appear particularly to dispel the most seductive as well as

the most dangerous of the passions, and consequently to its excesses, its errors, and consequently the error of solitude.

The first is in the female, (of whom I particularly speak here); and is that which physicians have named the uterine temperament. This temperament results from the influence of the organ of gestation over the physical and moral habits—particular predilections, sometimes only give us notice of it.

The second, is the sanguine bilious temperament; the third, the sanguine melancholic.

Beauty or plainness, tallness or shortness of stature are not particularly peculiar to either of these two latter temperaments. With regard to the signs which characterise them, (I only speak of females), the female of sanguine bilious temperament, has blonde or chesnut hair, blue or light brown eyes, a quick and bold gaze, full face, cheeks and lips highly colored, teeth good and well disposed and covered with so pure an enamel as nothing seems to tarnish; the bosom is well formed and developed without being too much so; her body and limbs unite flexibility with strength, her hips are far apart, her physiognomy announces health, vivacity, gaiety, candor, generosity, wit, and the love of pleasure; but at the same time an aptitude for useful and serious occupations; but little disposition for grief, and power to support it, without, however, being insensible to it, if she finds that she must meet it.

Thus, by the happy alliance that nature has made in her advantages of the simple bilious temperament with those of the simple sanguine, the virtues, the most important to society, the conditions most necessary for her happiness form her portion.

The female or young girl destined to live under the influence of the sanguine melancholic temperament, has received from nature, brown or black hair, eyebrows and large eyes also either brown or black. The eyes are usually somewhat set in their orbits, and not prominent or on a level with the face. The color of the features is much less than in the preceding case; her skin seems of a mere loose tissue, of a less lively tint, sometimes of the color of milk, which contains a certain quantity of water, at other times, somewhat dull, her face is rather thin than full and oftener oval than round, ordinarily, she has neither too much or too little of embonpoint, nevertheless, her bosom is usually more fully developed; the periodical evacuations are longer and more abundant with her than with those of the sanguine bilious temperament, because, according to physicians, she perspires more than the latter; she is as witty as the other, but she makes use of this gift less frequently and less familiarly. Genius with her is often united to wit; on her countenance we may read that she possesses both; we read too, there the elevation of feeling and the predominance of reason, and her heart, in fact, generally possess them. She has graces, but they are of noble quality, more severe than lively, more reserved and sentimental than brilliant, very sensitive, very irritable; modesty, circumspection and high feeling always accompany her; nothing appears to her a greater happiness than to love and to be loved with all the powers of the soul, without end or change; she is fidelity itself, she is all love and yet there are none who so tardily give away their affections, or are so wary of confidence; none fear to be deceived or abandoned more than she; none would

be more deeply nor more profoundly affected In grief, her sorrows are more silent than expressed, her gaze pierces the very depths of her heart.

Without principle, without education, or in the road to vice; a person of this character does not pause at ordinary faults—on the other hand when favored by a virtuous eduction she is not half virtuous, she is the honor of humanity.

But how dearly does nature sell to her these great advantages. If reason or other favorable circumstances do not promptly come to her aid in the various adversities of life, no one more easily suffers the violent attacks of despair. If she be not properly educated in religion on one more easily passes the limits of veritable piety; lastly, no kind of organization appears more likely to produce the vice of which I am writing, than this sanguine melancholic temperament.

Nevertheless, nature, without ceasing to be the same, presents itself under so many forms, that we frequently cannot recognise it without a constant habit of observation.

Assisted by fatal circumstances, the solitary vice may also take its victims from amongst those of other temperaments than those I have just described; certain climates, the mode of living, some species of temperament; are in truth causes which may predispose to dangerous secret habits; although these causes may be insufficient of themselves to produce them; but there are others who give the fatal impulse; these are the corrupt advisers, the criminal seducer of miserable wretches, who are themselves a prey to them, and whose destiny appears to be corrupt, and to be corrupted.

But from whatever cause the crime originates these are the ordinary signs by which we may recognise them.

The young girl who gives way to it loses her color, grows emaciated, does not increase in proportion to her age; from time to time she complains of pains in the chest, stomach, and back; of lassitude, without there being any known cause to give rise to such symptoms. She grows weak, her color alters more and more; her eyes, mouth, her walk, her mode of speaking, all her features, all her carriage in fact bespeak languor and indifference. Menstruation comes on either too much or too little, amidst nervous affections, and other serious derangements of health, with which it would not have been accompanied if the patient had been moral in her conduct; the periods of this periodical evacuation are prolonged or become too frequent, sometimes, they are changed into true hæmorrhages, and generally are much more in quantity than ordinarily. From this may result in a longer or shorter period of time, an habitual deranged state of the womb, and consquently a sufficient cause for all the affections or accidents to which this organ is liable.* Some solitudinarians have nervous affections, blue devils, pains in the lower part of the belly, and the whites; their eyes appear sunk; they are encircled with a black ring: sometimes they approach to that state which we call *strabismus*, or appear improperly turned from the alteration of the nerves which are distributed to the muscles which move them—in fact they partially squint; all their face assumes a sombre aspect, an old and care-worn expression; from

* Alphonse Servi, remarks in his excellent *Treatise on the Loss of Blood* that when menstruation is excessive in young girls, it is of great importance not to allow this affection to establish itself; for that it may in the end, be productive of sterility or abortion.—*Lessons on the Loss of Blood, page 1, and seq.*

weakness they cannot hold themse ves upright, at other times their body does really curve, at first insensibly, but afterwards very manifestly; they have fever, their hands are almost always damp with perspiration, burning, or else icy cold; in the end they become dry, cracky, trembling and without power; their arms are characterised by the same peculiarities; the skin is rigid and crepitant; they daily lose that soft and elastic roundness which one feels in touching the skin of persons who enjoy health; they are often also bathed in perspiration during the whole night.

The teeth of some break; the enamel looks as if it were cracked, or it is broken into small notches like those of a fine saw, results of their close pressure and grinding one against another, occasioned by the convulsions which almost always accompany the acts of solitary indulgence.

This grinding of the teeth, sometimes takes place with a very great noise. One of the patients whose history I have reported in the former letters, and whom I shall designate under the title of the bath patient, exhibited this peculiarity in an extreme degree, in the convulsions which came on every moment, that one could not listen to it without shivering.

Everything bespeaks in these persons exhaustion, and is indicative of sadness, ennui, and disgust, they are timid; but it is not the amiable timidity of modesty and chastity, which is very different from what they display.

The timidity natural to a young person is an ornament to her; theirs overwhelms them; they are more confused than timid, nothing pleases or interests them, neither the society of their relations or companions, nor dancing, nor the occupations of

their sex and age. Repose, indolence, and solitude, of which they are at once the sad lovers and victims, alone have charms for them. Not only do we not observe in them a desire for marriage, but on the contrary, we remark a prejudice against that happy state so conformable to the laws of nature, and the weakness of women who appear so much to need support. Numberless pustules sometimes make their appearance and inscribe in hideous characters their passions on their brow, when one would only expect to read soft modesty and decent amiability.

They frequently avoid the gaze of visitors; they are often embarrassed when one suddenly approaches them.

There are others on the contrary in whom this habit inspires a determined love for the most dissipated life and who plunge into the most fearful debaucheries.

These unhappy persons do not certainly always present all the symptoms I have enumerated. There are many, as is the case in other diseases. who do not exhibit always, or in so marked a manner, all the symptoms of this morbid state into which they are not a whit the less brought; but the appearance of the symptoms, the long catalogue of which I have just traced, ought to be sufficient to call the attention of a mother who knows the extent of her Holy Ministry; and her vigilance will soon tell her whether her daughter is still virtuous.

But I ought not to omit to say also, that though solitary vice can give rise to the alterations of health and present all the symptoms which I have named, they may also be the result of many affections, altogether independent of this predilection. Convulsions determined by worms, natural

attacks of hysteria, and many other causes can for example be the cause of rupture and grinding of the teeth, or of inequalities in their edges; but some notice should always be taken of them until we are assured of their true cause.

A mother cannot therefore have too much prudence in verifying her suspicions, by herself watching her daughter, or consulting a physician.

Sometimes a disease and the fatal habit may together threaten the life of a young girl; the danger is then still greater—let her parents hasten to remedy both the disease and the habit, or else let them prepare her funeral.

This complication has often been the cause of the inutility of medical skill and fruitless regrets

But if the fatal habit exist—how may we succeed in destroying it. I will reply to this question in succeeding letters

LETTER III.

I SHALL only speak in this place, Madame, of the moral and hygeinic means, by the aid of which the mother of a family may save her daughter from the peril in which I have supposed her to be; for these are the only means to which she can conveniently have recourse. From what I have already told you in one of my preceding letters, as the kind of constitution with which a young girl is gifted, may prove the first cause of her passion, it is important in the first place to get her under the most favorable conditions for the design conceived.

In fact, if the young solitudinarian is particularly remarkable for one of the temperaments I have described, if she owe her error to that, what can we

reasonably expect from morality alone, against a passion, or, to speak more correctly, against an affection whose source is in, and may be exclusively in, the physical organization? We may employ in vain, to obtain the desired result, observations, reproaches and entreaties of all kinds; in vain in such entreaties may we cite the most convincing examples; if we do not endeavor to quiet the fluids to bring back the sensibility of the nerves to a more moderate type, the passion will certainly remain, spite of all the moral powers called in to oppose it.*

I do not deny, that religion and morality may exercise the most powerful and useful influence on the passions; but I beseech you to remark, that religion and morality will most generally be powerless, if medicine—to which, besides, morality is so closely united—did not prepare the way for their triumph, by first giving her advice as to the mode of modifying the temperament.

* Are not the different physical constitutions and the different moral qualities of man, at the different epochs of his life, incontestible proofs of the influence of organization on the origin of the passions. Feeble and lymphatic infancy is timid and without virtue; fiery youth is affectionate and courageous; mature age, called the age of consistency, is judicious and ambitious; cold old age observes and judges; the patriarch, arrived at the extreme of life, withered and debilitated, is as fearful and as unfitted for the labor of the mind as infancy. We rarely view men with such privileges as Fontenelle, Saint Evremond, Fontenelle, and Voltaire. The greatness of soul which distinguished these men is no more the due of the centenarian than vigor of body. I do not believe, either, that we have ever seen two examples like that of the King of Portugal, who, in person, at the age of ninety, gained a victory in which fifty thousand of his enemies for ever bit the dust. A man was yesterday a sage, to-day he is a fanatic; and why? A burning bilious fever has seized him, or perhaps a very small portion of one of the membranes is slightly injected, and this injection cannot be even seen after death. (Vepfer de Apoplexia, Morgagini, Epistle 7.) And lastly, how often has been established the dependence of the passions and habits on constitution since the immortal "Treatise on Air Water, and Localities," up to our own days.

We cannot easily change a primitive organization, but we may hope to amend it by time and necessary care; and we have always this advantange, in doing what is necessary, that if we do not evidently change a constitution already vicious we may at least set some bounds to its influence and excitements.

The different antiphrodisacs, so puffed up by some persons, have rather been vaunted by credulity than from prudence and experience. They do not moderate the temperament, they destroy it; they do not regulate Nature, they stifle her. If we have recourse to them, save to prevent very great evils, their use may give rise to others no less serious.

When, then, in a young solitudinarian, all announces that predominance of the uterine, sanguino bilious, or sanguino-melancholic disposition, we ought to renounce almost absolutely the employment of the dangerous preparations of lead, opium, aconite, hemlock, and all of this class. These substances act through the brain, exercising over it, the heart, and the general system, the most noxious influence.

Bleeding, judiciously employed—that is to say, if the patient be not too much weakened, or low—may prove an useful auxiliary to simple hygeinic means, but the necessity or inutility of its employment can only be decided by physicians.

The diet of such an individual should be bread, a little fresh, containing if possible some rye flour; mild, diluent, and refreshing vegetables, such as spinage, beet-root, sorrel, roots of scoroma, radishes, &c.; melons, gourds; fruits perfectly ripe, such as cherries, plums, pears, red gooseberries, oranges, should, in their seasons, form part of their diet.

She should drink, frequently during the day, water containing a sufficient quantity of syrups of some of these fruits, and particularly the syrup of gooseberry, orange, and citron: buttermilk, also, from the cow, in every pint of which should be put twenty grains of nitre-nitrate of potash; occasionally, some orgeat, emulsions prepared without heat from seeds, and sufficiently flavored with acidulated syrups of citron, gooseberry, and pomegranate

The ordinary drink at meals should be a cold and light infusion of liquorice-root water slightly sweetened, or spring water alone. She should abstain from eating acid vegetables, such as celery, cabbage, artichokes, asparagus, as well as some other vegetable substances in which this property exists; such, for example, as mustard, &c.

Among fruits, she should avoid peaches, and strawberries; of roots, garlic, onion, black truffles, skirret. She should also abstain from fish, shell-fish, craw-fish, crabs, and other crustacea.

Nevertheless, as too frugal and too temperate a diet will not suit exclusively a person necessarily already enfeebled by so powerful a cause of disease and exhaustion; and as, moreover, too debilitating and too severe a diet, far from extinguishing the passions or regulating the imagination, often only produces opposite effects, in increasing the action of the brain—some animal substances must be added to the above diet—even beef itself; but generally roast or boiled white meats would be preferred, such as lamb, veal, chicken; nevertheless, proportionately, to the vegetable substances which the patient takes, which should be much more in quantity than the former.

She must particularly abstain from all the meats called *black*, from game kept too long, for they are acrid, strong, and irritating.

As the principal effect which we seek in these cases is to soothe and calm, it may readily be conceived that we ought not in any way to permit the use of spirituous liquors, coffee, nor any aromatic substance, and nothing of the kind should enter into the preparation of their dishes.

In general, the diet of all young girls, however pure may be their morals, and whatever may be the nature of their constitution, (their age being that of puberty, and they being in the plenitude of their functions and vigor of health) should be full and sufficient, rather than delicate; temperate, rather than stimulant; unless they are naturally debilitated or invalids. A simple and well-regulated mode of living is not only of great importance in disease; it is so in every position of life.

For, if it assists in restoring health when it is lost, it also preserves it when it is possessed.

If it produce a return to morality when it is neglected, it preserves it before it is destroyed.

It gives firmness to and recals reason, just as it prevents or disperses madness in a patient.

"Let those who deny," observes one of the princes of medicine, "that the difference of diet renders some temperate, others dissolute; some chaste, others incontinent; some mild, others quarrelsome; some diffident, others arrogant; let those, I say, who deny this truth come to me; let them follow my advice in eating and drinking, and I promise them that from it they shall draw great assistance for moral philosophy; they shall feel their mental faculties increase, they shall acquire more genius, better memory, more prudence, and more diligence."*

The patients of whose diet I have just spoken

* Galen, translated from the French of Tissot.

should, as often as possible, take a bath, for about half an hour, of tepid water, or of water simply with the chill off, and particularly in rivers, when situation and season will permit.

The water of the bath, by dissolving and carrying off the saline particles, as well as other organic matter which both the insensible and visible perspiration deposits on the pores and exhalent and absorbent orifices of the skin, thus takes from them a cause of irritation which, sympathetically, might excite other organs. In this way, baths are not less preservers of chastity than they are the first of cosmetics.

The patients, however, should not take cold baths if they cough, and if they feel pains in the chest; they should take them at long intervals if they produce such effects, or replace them by baths of about 95 or 96 Fahrenheit.

"Tepid baths may be productive of a result as advantageous as prompt, (says a physician who specially employed himself in ascertaining the advantages of baths for females) that of dissipating, as though by an enchantment, a nervous state amidst which the economy seems to be preparing in secret the storm of passion. And," he continues, "when hesitating between the suggestions of voluptuousness and the honors of virtue, the young girl with her pallid tint, her discolored lips, her eyes moistened with involuntary tears, seeks solitude and yields to melancholy reveries; a long tepid bath weakens the causes of this organization, moderates rather than opposes the prematurely excited powers, until, in accordance with duty, modesty permits her yielding to the most delightful and tender of all the passions."*

* Marie de Saint-Ursin.—Letters of a Physician concerning the influence of the dress of Women on their Manners and Health, and the necessity of the habitual use of Baths.

The effect of these means would be considerably strengthened by the application of a few leeches to the seat of the irritation, previously to the use of bath; and where no inflammatory symptoms have as yet exhibited themselves, either in the chest or other sensitive part, the patient should be induced to take gentle exercise in the open air, which has an equally beneficial influence on the mind and health; and it appears to me, that these two latter remmedies—the bath and exercise,—tend strongly to the preservation of good morals; as it may be recollected, that the chaste Susanna is represented at her bath, and that goddess, also, who among the ancients was said to preside over chastity, is generally drawn either in the enjoyment of the chace or partaking with her nymphs in the pleasure of the bath.

A change of climate, also, where attainable, should not be omitted, particularly if the one to which the patient has been accustomed should have been a warm one, and consequently disposed to excite the passions.

Hippocrates, who, after a lapse of twenty-two centuries, is still regarded as the chief of physicians, has remarked, that childhood is of longer duration, and puberty more greatly protracted, where hot winds do not prevail, and where the breeze is cool in spring and autumn; but that the eastern climes tend to raise immoderate passions.*

* In warm climates, puberty comes on at a very early age. Mahomet married Fatima when she was only eight years of age, and at nine she was a mother. A common occurrence in the eastern regions—Annales des Voyages.

According to some medical authorities, the furor uterus and unceasing erections appertain only to eastern climates; and Cabanis reports, that such diseases are very frequent in hot and dry countries, while they are never met with in moist and cool ones—Rapport du Physique et du Moral Influence des Climates.

Finally, those young persons whom it may be presumed are subject to violent excitement, or who may have already experienced their effects—particularly the *solitary*,—ought not to sleep on feather beds, for such indulgence induces and encourages lascivious feelings.

Their beds, on the contrary, should be as hard as they can well bear, stuffed, indeed, with horse-hair, or straw, and this almost immediately in contact with their bodies. It should be large, so as to enable them frequently to change their position; and, by such means, avoiding a prejudicial heat. This precaution is neither so ridiculous nor minute as may at first appear, since it has been recommended by the most celebrated physicians. A cool bed strengthens, while a warm one enervates. And, lastly, invalids of this description should remain in bed as short a time as possible.

LETTER IV.

Ringworms, and sundry other cutaneous disorders, as well as those affecting the mucous membranes, with which and the external skin there is a very great affinity, sometimes engender passions of a factitious and exciting nature, utterly independent of the mind, and consequently produce, occasionally, those secret habits among young women, who but for that, would be exceedingly chaste. I have met with more than one example of this description, and even some women, advanced in years, and divested of those feelings which attached them in youth, have complained of these irritations, when it has happened that their skins have been subjected to similar disorders.

Pains should be taken to ascertain whether such affections exist in a girl whose morals have been vitiated, or should she ever have been subjected to them, if she has only been partially cured, and in all such cases, the remedy ought to be directed solely to their entire removal, and the virtuous morals of the patient would add greatly to the efficacy of the prescription. For this purpose, leeches might be successfully applied where the inflammation is violent; a bath might be used of a moderate heat, in which also, a small quantity of sulphur of potash might be beneficially infused; also the frequent use of mild lotions, together with a diet of aperient vegetables, such as spinach, beet-root, chicory, chervil, and watercresses, all of which are anti-scorbutics; and form an admirable substitute for medicine. Change of air too, and if necessary, of country; attention to the clothes best fitted to perspiration; exercise, and those amusements most agreeable to the mind, are admirable elements in the art of healing these diseases.

A secret impulse to imprudent excitements is sometimes to be accounted for, in irregular menstruations, where the hemorrhoidal flow is restrained; in the acid and stimulating ichor of the whites; or in some peculiar internal disorganization, all which, however, have yielded to the proper treatment of these various accidents. It is, however, essential in all such derangement to take the advice of the best physicians, as they require different modes of treatment, and such as the quack is unable to prescribe, not only on account of their various natures, but also by reason of their causes and results; as for instance, in judging of ringworms, it is necessary to determine whether they

owe their origin to a scrofulous or scorbutic habit of the body, &c.

These observations on the dispositions which may lead to secret habits, and on the regimen to be observed in the effort to alloy such dispositions, as also in reference to those excitements from which such habits sometimes spring,—these remarks, I repeat, are nearly all that lie within the province of the medical man to acquaint a mother with. But there is still another class of considerations that belong solely to her, and which are not a whit less important than those I have been discussing, but these must form the subject of subsequent letters.

LETTER V.

While we are bestowing the best attention on the temperament, the regimen, and the particular affections (should any exist) of the young solitary, the chief remedy which it is advisable to impress on her, is that she should form a resolution to resist secret excitement, and avoid those impure thoughts that so constanly beset her; as without such a determination, all other efforts would be vain. Oh, may she form and adhere to such resolution; she would be sure of her reward; and what triumph can be so worthy of a young girl, as that of chastity.

The mother herself must supply the next necessary description of aid on a point wherein she is the best and most powerful arbiter, namely, in the marriage of her daughter; and it is devoutly to be wished that she may be enabled to effect this if the decay of the young patient be not already too far advanced, and if she be yet free from any serious

inflammation of the chest, or any other organic affection arising from such deplorable habits. Marriage would offer a desirable refuge to her if she be capable of attaching herself to a husband. And the parent who loves her child ought to do all in her power to promote such a union, provided there be a fair promise of happiness, and that it would bear the approving test of reason. If the best of our physicians so frequently recommended this, how much more is it to the interest of the mother to prescribe it. Should, however, the union of the daughter be impracticable, it would then be a parental duty to point out to the unhappy child how extremely pernicious and immoral is the course she has been pursuing, and that it is not only an error but a heinous crime in her to give way to such indulgences, forbidden alike both b decency and reason.

When such a vice has so far possessed itself of the faculties of those who indulge in it, they ought never to be left alone, until time and the strictest vigliance shall have triumphed over their punishments. There are numerous instances wherein this constant attention and unceasing solicitude have been crowned with success, and we have seen anxious mothers sharing their beds with their daughters already on the high road to the grave from such fatal indulgences, by which means alone, they have been snatched from death. The trial is doubtlessly one of difficulty, but it has had the desired effect, as the following case selected from many will attest. "Miss ———, a young lady fifteen years of age, had, while under her father's roof, fallen insensibly into a sort of imbecile indiocy, while the cause of her calamity had not even been suspected, she had lately lost her ruddy hue of health, together

with the spirits and vivacity so common to girls of her age. Her parents placed her at a boarding-school, in the vain hope that her intellectual faculties might be restored in the society and companionship of her schoolfellows, and the governess was instructed that the parents' object was not so much the attainment of further scholastic acquirements for their daughter, as her being brought forward with that lady-like carriage and bearing as might enable them to present her to society; but alas, such moderate desires, aided by all the cares of the mistress of the establishment, herself a woman of the world, were not, for some-time, to be realized; the energies of the young lady became daily more weakened and obscure; when all of a sudden the governess discovered that her young pupil was imbued with a secret and pernicious vice. She shuddered at the consequences, and trembled for the fate of her other pupils. From this moment, however, she determined on sleeping with her young invalid, and never in day-time suffered her to be absent from her, under any pretence, for a moment; she reasoned with her in a friendly manner, but with great firmness, and pointed out the danger she was rushing into. Her solicitude was not altogether unavailing, and she still hoped that recovery was possible; and indeed, after a few months exercise of these unceasing precautions, the anxious parents were enabled to introduce into society, not merely a common place young lady, but a woman really endowed with mind, with health and reason, in short a truly amiable woman.

The mother of such a girl should not only be as it were a part of her wardrobe, but actually her shadow; when any danger threatens the young offspring of the fowl, she does not confine herself to

vain terrors, but actually protects them under the covering of her wings.

After the happy results of the watchfulness of which I have just given an instance, the best method that maternal tenderness could adopt, would be a gentle persuasion to prevent any further attack of so dangerous an enemy; and the mother indeed is the only person that could reason effectually with her daughter, as it is not likely that such a subject could be mooted by any one else.

It frequently happens that girls of highly susceptible dispositions and lively imaginations become the victims of solitary habits, and in such cases it is highly necessary that the mother should be particularly watchful, and should the child be virtuous, the danger of her falling into such a vice might easily be prevented by the parents pointing out the sin and indecency of it; and in using the language of Buffon, tell her "that she is constantly working and doing everything, or rather leaving nothing undone that may tend to her own ruin." Mallebranche, too, has described this sin as the "domestic madness."

When this fatal error has been produced by the senses alone, it has at least a limit in the senses; but when once it takes hold of the imagination, it has no bounds. The senses leave some intervals of repose; but the imagination knows no relaxation.

The young solitary should moreover avoid all retirement either in doors or out. Those lovely and retired solitudes formed by the hand of nature in the midst of flowery valleys or thick shrubberries are not intended for her. They have too great an effect on the imagination for her to trust to without imminent danger, and instead of find-

ing the virtue there, that she is in search after, it is more than probable she would lose the little she has left. It is the wise alone that safely meditate in these natural and unfrequented shades, which are only made for the strong-minded, and the use of those delightful promenades, and sequestered vales, must not be allowed to those young persons who have not acquired the mastery of their passions.

LETTER VI.

The anxiety of a fond mother is naturally awakened, if she does not daily read contentment and happiness in the countenances of her daughters. Has she not sometimes perceived in the face of one a melancholy and secret sorrow which she seems afraid to trust to her, despite her prayers and tender feelings to unburthen the cause of, opening at the same time her arms and bosom to console her. Her stealthy tears will tell her that she errs, that she is unhappy, or that she is unwise; that she is unwise do I say, doubtless she desires to be otherwise, and reproaches herself for not being so; can she be blamed for yielding to her weakness,* she has made an open confession of her folly, and yet she persists in giving way to it.

The more one meditates on nature, the more one

* One cannot help regarding this propensity as the too frequently involuntary action of the soul, of which Sauvages reports an instance. A young girl under the dominion of an excessive feeling for solitary habits, was herself aware of both the shame and the danger of it. She went to her confessional, and on her knees opened the whole of her conduct to the confessor, and implored forgiveness on the promise of sincere repentance; she soon however forgot her vow and in her bewilderment fell deeper in her sin.

feels convinced that it is no fault of her's, if mankind be not happy; she has abundantly proposed it and furnished ample means for its enjoyment. All the elements of happiness are to be found in her system; she therefore is not to be blamed; it is we ourselves who judge her too harshly. Had she not created mankind weak, and filled him with the apprehension of disease, eager as he is for enjoyment, intemperance would speedily have developed passions that he would not have been able to master. Vices are now engendered by irregular desires, and disordered imagination; these must be obviated, and man still left free from the influence of "Ennui;" nature therefore formed him for labor and toil.

How reasonably Voltaire expresses himself, when he says:—

> "How oft is toil the source of pleasure,
> I pity him o'erpressed with leisure."

Next to temperance and soft persuasion, it appears to me that "work" is the fittest remedy, either to restore to, or to preserve young people in —virtue and happiness, however high their rank may be: this labor ought to be daily, moderate, and properly regulated. Daily, in order that one may get into the quiet habit of it; moderate, that is to say, sufficient, so as to leave no room for lassitude, and still to keep one from being disgusted with it; and well regulated, since it is a maxim of both ancient and modern philosophers, that the soul is well pleased with order. We ought specially to inspire the young melancholist (for solitary vice is a species of melancholy, and of the most fatal description) with the taste for,

and habit of, daily toil; the object of which might be, as far as possible, of a useful and agreeable nature, as for instance, botany, embroidery, and light dressmaking. Such a use of her time would be of great assistance to her, since nothing is so pernicious to the youthful mind as indolence, which speedily places it on the very precipice of vice. In my opinion, says a very learned Swisa physician, the celebrated Zimmerman, (in his excellent treatise on solitude,) a quiet and moderate activity where the weakness of the nerves has engendered disgust and apathy, is the surest and most effectual method of counteracting lassitude, ill-temper, and melancholy. De Lille, also, has well observed, that the mind is rendered happy and independent by a prudent care, assisted by light labor; that too much leisure vexes and wearies, and stirs up a host of tumultuous passions; that toil calms our sorrow and overcomes our vices, while it strengthens our pleasures and confirms our virtue; and I might further add, that it was while in his corn fields, that Ruth succeeded in obtaining the love of Boaz. Those pastimes and recreations to which the female mind has a tendency, might also be followed with advantage, such as the study of languages, polite literature, history, oratory, poetry, music, and painting. But, in directing the tastes of the young invalids to their pursuits, care should be taken, as Fenelon advises, in his "Noble and Sublime," not to place before them any examples of a languishing and voluptuous tendency, for fear of adding fuel to a mind already kindled by the torch of adverse pas sions. Consequently, such masters as Albani, and painters of a similar description, should be avoided, while Raphael and Poussin might safely form

their study, together with Redoate and Waens denonk, for landscape, fruit, and flowers.

But above all things the proper selection of music requires the greatest care on the part of those who are interested in subverting the peculiar disposition of which we are now treating; as were the choice of musical pieces of a melancholy nature, it would strengthen and establish in the mind of the solitary victim, all those low spirited and debilitating feelings under which she is already suffering! were it tender and voluptuous, it would be unbecoming to the education of the young, which should always be based on decency and reason, and would moreover be sure to hasten the evil we are desirous of destroying by exerting both mind and body, and feeding their fever, which we ought to starve.

A certain musician was forbidden by the Ephori to play on a particular string of his lyre, that evoked a peculiar kind of languishing notes, and which had a tendency to corrupt the mind; some historians have even stated that he was banished for having touched this chord.

While music, however, if injudiciously selected, may have a pernicious effect, on the other hand, when it is of a noble, sublime, fresh, and lively character, the greatest advantages will result from it, and greatly aid the benefit sought for in our present considerations.

Generally speaking, there is no art, no science, and no occupation, equal to agreeable music, which has the charm of dispelling gross ideas, and substituting those of an opposite character; we might almost liken it to a sort of Proteus, which, capable of a thousand varying shapes, and possessing, in an irresistible manner, the language of every passion

whether delightful or painful, finds its way to the inmost recesses of the soul, and raising this or that feeling, or this or that idea, excites or soothes, saddens, or enlivens; in a word, works upon our thoughts and feelings just as it pleases. There are few persons who have not experienced these effects, or have not witnessed them in others; and how strong must be the power of music when it is so capable of controlling the mind, charming the very nature of its thoughts, and frequently silencing, if not dispelling, pain itself.*

But one of the principal objects which we ought to propose to ourselves, in the moral treatment of melancholy in general, is to divert the mind of the patient from the vicious direction which the disease has created on it; and no change of idea and thought can be so salutary as that which would result from the choice of such music as I have just pointed out, varying from the noble and sublime, to the soft and lively; but in no case to be suffered to touch upon the passion we desire to overcome; so that, in time, oblivion of the passion

* Many authors and examples might be quoted to show the amazing influence of music. Dutrivai, the treasurer of France, who died at Montpellier, furnishes us with a remarkable instance of the power of music over pain. He had been for a long time a dreadful sufferer from an ulcer in his leg, from the agony of which he could find no relief but in music, that invariably sent him to sleep. When on his death-bed, by way of soothing his last moments, the mass for the dead was celebrated in his chamber, he himself selected the parts; and thus he quitted life without pain. . . . . Ernest, Duke of Bavaria, also, who had been for years a martyr to the gout, so much so that he was obliged to relinquish all public duties,—devoted himself entirely to music, and found in the study of it a cessation from those dreadful pains to which he had been so long subjected. . . . Professor Moreau de la Sarthe mentions an instance of his having cured a patient of a melancholy of very long standing, and which had reached a period of high mental alienation, owing to a disappointment in love, by merely playing on a harp, the patient remaining in a bath during the music.

might be produced. Light and pleasing airs would seem favorable to persons afflicted with a melancholy temperament; or melancholy affections; and would act on them as a specific, or, if I might so say, as a kind of vital air, which as soon as they tasted the delights of, the waters of oblivion would flow through their souls, and efface all their pains, leaving nothing in their stead but flowers, and a laughing imagery, and they would at once fancy themselves suddenly metamorphosed into new creatures; and, indeed we may have observed that, wherever melancholy patients have been made to be gay and lively, they carry these oppos te feelings to their highest extent.

It is only those of an exquisite sensibility who are capable of appreciating all the charms of music, and we know that none are more sensitive than melancholy patients. Bourdelot, likewise, in his history of music, has affirmed, that a celebrated physician declared to him, that, by means of this art, he had completely cured a lady of rank, who had been driven mad by a disappointment in love. Pomme, also, a physician of Arles, has published the case of a young girl who was never free from hysterics, and whose bodily and mental health were perfectly restored by the same means; and transactions of the Society of Arts, at Paris, relate many similar instances.

Music not only possesses the advantages of removing from the minds of those young persons afflicted with the delirium of solitary vice, the pernicious ideas that are constantly delivering them up to the propensity that is secretly destroying them—of restoring them to the enjoyment of all their faculties—and being singularly applicable in the proper direction of them, but it also engenders

the love of virtue, and regulates their tastes in the pursuit of it, so much so, indeed, that it holds a high place in our temples, both as the interpreter and the charm of prayer, having in all ages been consecrated to these uses. The ancients employed it especially in the encouragement and support of all the separate virtues—courage, honor, coolness, reason, moderation, kindness, gentleness, and even chastity, and why, indeed, should not such noble attributes be conceded to it?

Pythagoras, one of the greatest men of antiquity, had a high regard for music, which exercised an almost divine influence over him, and he considered it so necessary in soothing and regulating the passions, that he required his pupils to begin and finish the day with it, but he at the same time required that it should be accompanied by songs of a virtuous tendency.

With respect to the application of the art of painting and design in the case of young persons who have been led away by solitary vice, I should give the same precepts as regards music. All those subjects that have a direction to indolence or voluptuousness should be carefully avoided: flowers, landscapes, moral or historical pictures, might judiciously be selected as furnishing fit employment for the crayon or the pencil in distracting the mind from the dreadful mania.

Those pursuits and studies which require a tolerable degree of exercise to carry them out, are peculiarly fitted to assist the hints above given as for instance, the study of entomology, botany, or mineralogy, when the weather and season admit of them, as the exercise which is combined with such pursuits gives employment to the mind as well as to the body, and furnishes strength to

both, and while it produces new impressions, it changes and eradicates all those evil and immoral ones that quiet and indolence have given birth to.

The study of botany, for instance, followed up in fine weather, in a lovely situation, and in the company of gay, lively, good tempered, and well educated associates, with whom the relations of the invalid may occasionally interminglе, offers resources that very few others can supply. The exercise it requires is sufficiently prolonged, and the pure morning air, either in the woods or on the hills, is particularly refreshing, filling the mind and soul, especially in youth, with delicious feelings of happiness, and liberty, and infusing a freshness and purity of thought without parallel. What can be more delightful than the opening of a fine day, the awakening of the plants and flowers, their early perfume, the forgetfulness of the crowded town, the various hues of the landscape, the discovery and examination of objects, their characters and the choice of them, together with the classifying those plants and insects that have escaped previous attention and are not yet included either in the book or the picture, and with which you propose to enrich them, some of the party relating anecdotes while walking, others stopping to admire a beautiful prospect, here a valley, and there a stupendous precipice, the appetite excited and allayed at convenient opportunities, a fountain offering at the same time pure and refreshing draughts, and interesting objects of research; a stream well stocked with fish, and last of all, the return home, to enjoy sleep without dreaming, which though long appears short, produced by these agreeable occupations, and undisturbed by any distracting reflections. What a source of innocence and happiness is this!

It would be wise, therefore, whenever the opportunity permitted it, to enable those young persons, whom we might be desirous of curing of this baneful propensity, to devote themselves to these pursuits in the manner I have pointed out: not in closets with dried flowers or pictures, but in the open air, in the fields, the places where the plants and flowers themselves are growing. And we should most likely then very soon find these young melancholists playfully descending the hills with improved health, better morals, and higher spirits the happy fruits of the pure air they have been inhaling, and the gentle exercise they have indulged in. Women ought indeed to make botany one of their choicest studies, as it would preserve them from many inconvenient diseases, and strengthen them without further labor than their ordinary exercise.

Gardening on a moderate scale is very salutary for such patients as also for young persons of less blameable morals, but let it be understood they must actually cultivate the ground, expending time and labor so as to exercise their courage; the produce may be bestowed in charity.

I am persuaded that almost any solitary sinner, who is still susceptible of pleasures in this kind of life, may be radically cured both physically and morally in a very short time.

Application to any art will counterpoise the greatest moral afflictions. Each vanquished difficulty gives pleasure, the soul contemplates with satisfaction its finished labor, and reposes in calm content. The pleasures of the heart are attainable by all who are free, tranquil, and loving, such are always self-satisfied and well-disposed to others. How far preferable is the happiness of a country

life to the deceiving felicity of palaces and the most brilliant circles! Lassitude is unknown in the Alpine vallies where innocence abides, and which strangers quit with tears.

But how can young ladies become habituated to such a mode of life, it will be asked? may women live by it: they were instructed from infancy, which is a state much feebler than that of the young patients for whom I am now prescribing.

Labor was, however, to these rustic women, an education to which they were early subjected. This is true, and how were they thus inured to rural labor? by a daily task adequate to their strength being exacted from them. Patients should be treated thus: a little fatigue must not be minded, they will bear it with sufficient intermissions of labor; they must be interested and fatigued that their intelligence and courage may be at once exercised, and their bodies disposed for sleep at the end of the day's labor, so that the need of rest may overcome the seductions of the fatal habit. The development of the physical and moral powers is to be found in a little pain and fatigue, which are the elements of happiness both in youth and the rest of life.

Few mothers would consent that their daughters should expose themselves to the weather so as to render their skin coarse, or should harden their hands even for the sake of increased health and vigor; they dread the loss of certain feeble attractions, not considering that delicacy is akin to disease, and that health, which is indispensable to beauty, is allied to strength in robust exercises, and is the source of sound and hardy generations. A delicate woman is often pretty at the expense of true beauty, which is rather combined with strength than deli-

cacy. Besides, are not the beauties of the mind worthy of regard? and certainly the mind would be benefitted by the mode of life which I advise. Agricultural life is a succession of immediate relations between God and man, a school of piety, simplicity, moderation, and love of labor. The softest passions which truly constitute our felicity have their birth amid fruits and flowers, whereas those which are the torments of our hearts infest cities with idleness, ambition, luxury, and imaginary pleasures.

Moreover, I here only propose a mode of cure for a dangerous disease and habit: the habit once surmounted and the disease healed, the patients are free to live as they please, and drop the use of the remedy.

Excursions on the water will be found very advantageous to young persons afflicted with melancholy, they might even be taught to manage a boat and engaged to exercise their strength and skill with much benefit to their health upon the water.

As much may be said of other exercises. Excursions in the country also will be very beneficial in botanical researches, for instance, which interesting study, under wise guidance, will divert and instruct the mind and avert it from ideas of a dangerous tendency; for the mind requires care as well as the body, and ideas must be studied in the former no less than the humors and vital dispositions in the latter.

Excursions on foot, or horseback, all kinds of exercises, needle work, drawing, music, botany, garden work, boating,—these and the like occupations will be found equally efficacious and interesting in diverting the miserable victims from their accursed habit.

But there is another order of occupations in which the solitarily vicious may find correctives of their passion, and this order belongs more especially to the mind. The simplest, the most important of these is reading. History interests all ages, and the knowledge it gives is of the most useful kind I would recommend such history as Rollin's, where entertainment is mingled with instruction. The poets also afford an infinite scope to an ardent imagination, and books of travels seldom fail to excite a wholesome curiosity and awaken the intelligence to the occurrences of the world; a most important effect where the faculties have been absorbed in solitary indulgence.

After reading comes composition. Some of the victims of Onanism may be possessed of natural talent to qualify them to enter the lists of literature. Let such ambition where it exists be stimulated; let them write, whether there be any chance of their works being printed or read, still let them write, for nothing more than composition tends to detach the mind from objects foreign to this one favorite pursuit.

I not only advise these pursuits as a means of employing the time of young women addicted to melancholy, and solitary vices, but I would have them urged to enter into them with passion and ardor. One passion must drive out another, and no ordinary inclination or half listless efforts will prevail against the most imperious and fatal of all habits. The art of the physician is shown here in substituting one passion for another. Pope, Bonnet, and Zimmerman, have wisely said the passions are favorable winds by which man may guide his vessel on the ocean of life, but he must watch them or he will be in danger of shipwreck.

Yet there is a period of exhaustion and wear of nature when the victims of solitude are insensible to any external charm. If the arts fail to excite their admiration, or books to awaken interest, or poetry enthusiasm, I fear the evil is without remedy.

But if the mind be sensible to art or beauty, I will never despair, but endeavor to strengthen these salutary sensations and profit by what remains of life. A devoted attachment to books, music, or painting, is one of the most hopeful signs in such cases.

How wonderful is the influence of books on the intelligence and the health of individuals! Petrarch became ill when he ceased reading and writing. One of his friends, the Bishop of Cavaillon, fearing the intensity of his studies might injure his health, asked him for the key of his library. Petrarch gave it without suspicion, when the bishop locked the door and said, "I forbid you to read or write for ten days." Petrarch obeyed, the first day seemed to him longer than a year, the second he suffered with a headache, and on the third he was attacked with fever. The bishop alarmed at his condition, restored him his key and his health with it.

But we must be cautious what books we place in the hands of our patients, whose maladies, especially of the imagination, may be terribly enhanced by the suggestions of certain ideas. Then I would positively prohibit all romance, and amatory tales or poems, which would, to persons of susceptible and weakened imagination, be like fire to flax. Let all seducing pictures and representations of the amatory passions be therefore banished from the reading-room of my asylum.

The same line of argument will apply to the selection of books for young women of sound mind and incorrupt habits. The choice of books should be ever exercised with discernment, if not with austerity. Be it remembered, that virginity is of the mind as well as of the body, being no less moral than physical, and consisting as much in purity of thought as in chastity of person :—

"Ante virum corpus spiritus ante Deum."

I will conclude this advice by observing, that great attention must be paid to diet, which must always be analagous with the habits of life, or occupation, as well as suited to the condition of the patient.

LETTER VII.

Nothing is more important, if we wish to secure our children from bad habits, than to pay attention to the society which they frequent, for they are no less certain to be taught evil by the bad than to learn to conduct themselves worthily from the good. Onanism is an acquired vice, and parents should be especially careful of the morals of their servants, also how they entrust their children to them. Maid-servants have often corrupted their young mistresses, and initiated them into the most horrible practices.

As certain inertness of character is a peculiarity of persons addicted to solitary indulgence, be especially careful that those to whose society you entrust your children be possessed of a bold, noble and enterprising nature, which will to a great degree guarantee their freedom from this vice.

Religion may be called on for succor in a disease as much of the mind as the body. "Wrap yourself in the mantle of religion," said a mother to her daughter, "and it will be your protection against the weakness of youth and the perils of age." Women, especially those of a melancholy turn, are generally religiously disposed, which may thus be taken advantage of, by opposing religion to their passion; and indeed, experience warrants our conclusion that many, out of regard to religion, have been induced to sacrifice their solitary indulgence.

LETTER VIII.

Religion, when invoked with confidence and wisdom seems indeed seldom to have disappointed the hopes of repentant, solitary sinners.

The collection of letters I have made affords numerous examples. "Such, sir," one of these individuals writes to Dr. Doussin Debreuil, "are the evils which an afflicted patient requests you to heal. Her constitution was good, and she owes her life only to religious principles, which could not indeed repress her fatal habit, in time to avert such consequences, that she can never hope for a perfect restoration."

Very many others have not had courage to support a melancholy existence, and have crowned their crimes with suicide. These words are found in the second letter:—

"I should often have yielded to the temptation of terminating my miserable existence, if reason and religion, which only console me, had not prevented me."

We remark, in another instance, that the voice of religion was more powerful in the heart of one of these victims to a miserable propensity than that of Nature herself:—

"Religion," says she, "alone enabled me to gain a victory over my senses, which the love of life could not do."

Dr. Bertrand, having often been struck with the alterations of such patients in face and general appearance, had effigies made of them in wax, that the frightful deformity might terrify and deter others from the practice. I have been told that nothing could be imagined more distressing than the spectacle he thus prepared; and, certainly the idea was one of a friend to humanity.

A young woman who had seen this collection was much struck, yet she owned that she owed her return to reason and the preservation of her life to the terrible impression made on her mind by the sight, aided by the influence of religion, without which it would not have succeeded. These are her words:—

"The frightful spectacle shown me by Dr. Bertrand much shocked me; but my wretched passion had so possessed my mind, that had it not been for religion, whose aid I sought, I could not have renounced it."

We may here observe, that if religion effected the cure, the terrible example offered drove the patient to religion.

Tissot gives many examples of similar cures In fact, no one can doubt but that a profound religious sentiment produces the happiest results; yet its counsels should be given by humane and intelligent advisers, who, having studied philosophy know how to adjust the balance between reason

and the passions, and who also are aware of the danger of superstitious ideas and vain terrors on weak minds.

A woman, twenty-five years old, of a strong constitution, fell into violent hysterical affections, and was subject to alarming nocturnal visions. She was convinced that a beggar, whom she had refused to relieve, and who had threatened to bewitch her, had accomplished his menace. She imagined herself possessed by a demon, who assumed various forms, and sometimes uttered cries like a bird, at other times lugubrious sounds, or piercing shrieks, which filled her with excessive terror. She kept her bed for several months, disregarding all advice, and deaf to the voice of friendship. The curate of the place, an enlightened man, of an amiable, persuasive character, gained an ascendancy over her, and prevailed with her to quit her bed, and occupy herself with house affairs, then to work in the garden, and take other salutary exercises. The effect was a cure, which continued uninterrupted for three years. At the end of this period, the good curate died, and was succeeded by a stupid bigot, who, believing the woman to have been really possessed, exorcised her, and shut her up. "The effect of these absurd remedies," says Professor Pinel, 'may be imagined."

I, therefore, advise a prudent mother to induce her afflicted daughter to seek refuge in the arms of religion, with dignity, and not in a stupid manner; to heal her imagination, and gain the power and practice of virtue, but not to become a fanatic or fool.

The young solitary, whose mind is weakened, should on no account be allowed to hear violent or mysterious preachers

Great care should also be taken in the selection of religious books. Well or ill chosen as these may be, their effect will be very dangerous or highly advantageous. By all means interdict such as have an ascetic tendency, which are filled with contemplations and extacies.

Women are very sensitive and excitable, especially such of them as are afflicted with solitary passions, so bordering on hysteria, that there is great reason to fear their minds may be dangerously worked upon by such reading, of which many examples might be given. The simple and sublime histories of Scripture, especially the Life of Jesus Christ, are the best religious reading, in such cases, for the purification of the imagination, the elevation of the mind, and the strengthening of religious feeling. The life of Saint Vincent de Paul is also an excellent work: his benevolence was such, that heaven seems to have sent this saint to be a father to helpless orphans; such reading as this cannot fail to be beneficial.

If all this fail to eradicate the accursed habit, let the mother of the young person represent to her the example of the young peasant girl, mentioned in the first part of this work, on the subject of manners; also that of the mother of a family who could not refrain from outraging Nature on her death-bed, and in her last moments.

Let her be assured she may fall into a similar state, and, notwithstanding all precautions, suffer the like infamous public exposure with these misrable women.

History reports that a frightful melancholy, of an epidemic nature, having attacked the women of Milet, a town in Ionia, they could not endure existence, but hanged themselves daily in great

numbers. The magistrates, to stop the practice, proclaimed that the first female suicide should be exposed naked to the view of the populace; whereupon, the fear of shame overcame the contagion of the epidemic, and the suicides at once ceased.

Let the victims of solitude reflect that they expose themselves to still greater infamy, when, after a certain time, they lose their reason and are exposed to all eyes as subject, in that state, to the tyranny of the habit which consumes their lives. The young peasant girl, the solitary of the bath, and the matron I have mentioned, are melancholy examples of such a possibility.

When all remedies, all advice, have failed, and the passion blindly subjugates the individual, who is deaf to scorn, wisdom, and decency, force must be restored to: a straight-waistcoat must be used, and certain bandages applied to the seat of irritation; the habit once forcibly broken, the former means must be again applied, and it may be hoped with success.

I conclude with advice dictated by reason and humanity, and justified by success; while the power remains, sacrifice the accursed vice at the most precious altar of Nature. the altar of Hymen.

SKETCH OF MEDICAL TREATMENT.

It never entered into my design to give, in this work, a mode of medical treatment for affections

which ordinarily result from secret habits, the moral treatment of which I have explained. I will, therefore, only subjoin a few medical precepts and observations.

Milk is generally good for such patients, especially when taken with certain mineral waters, such as those of the German Spa, or Charbonniers near Lyons.

Different tonics, such as quinine, cold baths, and immersions in cold water, are also very beneficial.

Soups made of beef, veal, mutton, flavored or not with a little wine or spices, may be very advantageously given; but all inflammable substances or ingredients must, in certain cases, be rejected altogether in the treatment of these disorders, according to the nature and degree of the disease and the temperament and general state of the patient.

Exciting and tonic medicines, in certain cases, are not advisable, and in some very injurious; as when, for instance, irritability has been excited to an excessive degree by the fatal habit, or where local inflammation may exist, or fever from the same source, with thirst, dryness of the skin, &c.

Buttermilk, in such cases, is the best internal remedy, according to Tissot, whose opinion is confirmed by my experience; milk whether of the cow or the ass is not so good, and is sometimes prejudicial.

Woman's milk drawn from the breast has sometimes, beyond hope, restored patients who had been reduced to extremity. I witnessed, some years ago, a remarkable case of the kind; but such instances are rare.

Patients have been restored by great circumspection, and the use of ordinary milk.

Tissot gives an example of a cure performed in this manner. The patient who suffered severe pains in the breast, and was subject to vomiting, and in a state of extreme debility, subsisted three months upon well boiled milk, two or three eggs, and pure water, daily. She drank milk four times a-day; twice hot from the cow without bread, and twice hot with bread. Her medicine was an opiate of quinine, orange peel, and syrup of myrrh. Her stomach was covered with an aromatic plaister; all her body was well rubbed with flannel every morning; she took as much exercise as possible on foot and horseback, and lived in the open air. Her debility and pains in the chest prevented her from using the cold bath. These remedies were so successful that she recovered her strength and stomach, and after a month could walk a league.

I knew a person who was so reduced by solitary indulgence as to be able only to live upon milk, of which she consumed all that the village could furnish in certain seasons of the year.

When Tissot ordered quinquina with wine, he did not restrict his patients to a milk diet, but gave them the remedy in the morning, and milk at night. He was obliged in certain cases to invert this order, as wine in the morning with some patients causes vomiting, as I have also found.

Imitating this great practitioner, when I prescribe milk mixed with mineral waters, I advise my patients to begin by drinking several bottles of this water before mixing it with milk.

Quinquina renders milk digestible where it would otherwise not be so. I have attended a person worn out with this vice, whose stomach absolutely rejected all food. She could neither eat bread nor any animal substance—even light broths were

vomited up—lastly, any kind of nourishment, fluid or solid, occasioned frightful cholics. I advised her to boil an ounce of yellow-powdered quinquina, in a pint of water, for an hour, and to mix six spoonsful, three times a-day, in a bowl of milk, adding two spoonsful of distilled water of *menthe*, and two of orange flower, with the yolk of a fresh egg and a large spoonful of sugar, and to use the milk as much as possible. She did not vomit it up. Some time after she could mix a little bread with it. I begged her to attend to her morals most severely; she promised, and kept her word. I added twelve pills daily, composed of orange peel, of bitter extract of chicorie, of *cachou* and syrup. The addition of a quarter of a grain of musk per pill, has sometimes very good effects.

This person every day bathed ten minutes in a river. After three weeks she could eat rice soups with bread and fowl, also well cooked beef and mutton. After five months she was capable of all her former occupations and exercises. I lost sight of her. I afterwards heard that after nine months tolerably good health, she had relapsed into the state from which I had rescued her; that a clever physician had again restored her in three months, after which she lived four months in apparent health, and then died, after a short illness.

Tissot, of whose milk cures I have given an example, also restored by this means partly, and partly by tonics, a person who had been entirely exhausted; whose stomach, though very weak, was still capable of digesting, but whom want of sleep had reduced to a deplorable state of leanness At six in the morning she took six ounces of decoction of quinine with a spoonful of Canary wine an hour after, ten ounces of goats new milk with

a little sugar and an ounce of orange flower. She dined on cold roast fowl, with bread, and a glass of excellent Burgundy wine with water.

This regimen confirms the observations of many doctors,—that the patients eat heartily, while the digestive organs continue undestroyed.

At six in the evening the patient took a second dose of quinquina; at half-past six she went into a cold bath, and remained there ten minutes; on leaving it she went to bed; at eight she took the same quantity of milk. She arose between nine and ten.

As these patients are generally in a relaxed state, the cold bath producing a tonic effect, often, at the same time, occasions a kind of hemoptysy. But this need not excite disquietude unless the spitting of blood continue, or be accompanied with pains in the chest and difficulty of breathing.

I have been confirmed in my opinion by experience. I had ordered river baths for a young person weakened by the vice of solitude. She told me, each time after the first bath, with joy mingled with disquietude, that, as she went to the river (she lived rather far from the river, and went on foot) she could scarcely support herself, but, at her return, she felt herself wonderfully strengthened; she also observed that, each time on reaching the river she spat blood. As, however, her breathing was not interrupted, nor her chest pained, I only directed her to continue a shorter time in the water, and to bathe twice a-day. She followed my advice; her spittings ceased, and her health was restored.

Obstructions, inflammations, abscesses, or internal ulcers hinder cold-bathing, and render prudent to abstain from all exciting tonics.

Weak and melancholy solitaries should not be made to vomit. I directed, by letters, a person much exhausted by secret maladies, whose chest was much weakened and irritated. She wrote to me one day that her mouth was very unpleasant, and that she wished to administer a vomit. As the details she gave me seemed not to warrant urgent remedies, I wrote, forbidding the use of the vomit. She wrote to me a few days after, expressing great surprise at being forbidden to vomit when she was so disposed, but telling me my letter had come too late, she having taken a common vomit, which had caused her to throw up only blood; but, happily, she had thought of drinking syrup of Marshmallow, and, after a time, the vomiting and discharge of blood had ceased.

Such persons must not be purged without good reasons, and great care must be given to the choice of purgatives. In certain cases, bleeding may be useful; but not as a general principle, and only when the system is much inflamed and the strength not exhausted. These cases are rare, and require particular examination, testing the judgment of the ablest physician.

Local affections, from the same cause, may require certain secondary means, but can only be thoroughly cured by a general mode of treatment and immediate change of conduct.

These auxiliaries are, for instance, different epithemies on the region of the stomach to re-animate its powers or control spasms.

Certain local bleedings for local inflammations, or for retained menstruation.

General bleeding, even to a great extent, at the period called critical.

A determination of blood to the uterus may irri

tate the sexual organs, of which I gave an example. I was visited by a countrywoman of so powerful a frame that she looked like a prize fighter in woman's clothes. She was forty-eight, and every three months had an attack of uterine frenzy, when she would break everything to pieces within her reach, and three men could scarcely hold her. I bled her, and she was tranquil for three months, when the fit would return. She was aware of its approach by certain tremblings, and would come to me to be bled; and with these precautions she escaped return of the attack.

Electricity, and certain powders used as snuff, are in cases of gutta serena.

Such auxiliaries are very excellent to stop similar symptomatic runnings, and they should be tonic, relaxing or purgative, according to the nature of the flux, independently of the vicious habits of the patients.

The rational and particular remedies in certain cases of phthisis may be used.

Also the palliatives applied in cases of cancer and the like. The regimen should always be simple, and depend upon the therapeutic or medicamentary treatment; tonic, if adynamy prevail, that is, failing of excitability and contractility, but mild and soothing, if heat, rigidity, and irritability prevail.

Generally, however, the food and beverage of such patients should be strengthening, restorative, and temperate, easy of digestion, and never sour or flatulent.

The occupations of the patients should be proportioned to their powers and mingled with amusement, to efface, if possible even the memory of their abuses.

We can only give some general precepts, and offer certain examples. The tact to distinguish and apply the rules of medicine, can only be imparted by study of the science.

I will, therefore, not undertake here to give a more complete history of the medical treatment of these maladies, which can only be properly applied by physicians; and, indeed, I published this little work for certain members of the profession, who may not have been thoroughly initiated into the mysteries and difficult art of healing such dis-

A simple drink for hemoptysy, or blood-spitting—Syrup of [illegible]eat in cold, or luke-warm water if the former cause spasm.

Another: Syrup of Marshmallows, used in the same manner.

Another: Syrup of lemon; *idem.*

Mitigating remedy for pains in the chest and blood-spitting, also for irritation and sanguinary excretions of the digestive organs—Take a calf's foot, boil it in a pint of milk four or five hours; add a pound of sugar. Take a spoonful of this jelly from time to time; assist the effect by drinking a glass of whey at each dose. Eight or ten leeches may be applied to the parts affected.

Simple application to calm irritation of the stomach, resulting from Onanism; also vomitings from the same cause.—A hare skin dressed with the hair on placed on the epigastrum next the skin.

Another: Twenty-four grains of camphor, or the yolk of an egg, six grains of musk; make a plaster of it, and spread it on the part; drink barley-water, or marsh mallow-water with syrup of violets.

Stomachical tonic.—Take a plaster of *theriaque* and place it on the belly.

Another.—Leaves and stalks of mint, sage, *melisse*, rosemary, hyssop, a handful of each with a pinch of lavender, beat them in a mortar, place them in fine linen, and apply them to the hollow of the stomach. This must be stopped when it irritates the sexual organs.

Frictions.—I knew a person afflicted with daily cholic, owing to her bad conduct. The remedies which most relieved her were rubbings with a coarse cloth over the organs of digestion and the corresponding organs.

Ointment for the boils.—Cinaber one grain, camphor one scruple; mix it with common wax, spread on linen, and cover with it the part affected. Repeat the treatment twice a-day at least.

Another (for chronical eruptions of the skin of syphilitic kind).—Yellow sulphate of mercury one grain, axonge one ounce; mix them together. Spread a little on the boils, or other cutaneous eruptions. The dose must be regulated by the effect it may be found to produce, and the intensity of the affection to be combated.

Pills of Quarin.—For tonic fluxes, or which come from the second causes of weakness and relaxation, independently of the attention to be paid to the first cause:

Root of Valerian	. . .	1 oz.
Iron powder, not rusted	. .	3 grs.
Myrrh, Incense, Extract of Tormentille	. .	1½ gr. each.

Make three pills of 3 grains. Take them from seven to ten, thrice a day.

The following electuary of Tissot also prevails against leucorrhea or white loss of the same nature:

Conserve of roses	3 oz.
Conserve of rosemary } Quinquina powder } . . .	1 oz.
Mastic	2 grs
Cachou	1 gr.

Mix with enough orange syrup to make an electuar, flavor it with three drops of essence of *cannelle* and take a quarter ounce twice a day.

Observation has induced Doctor Saint Marie of Lyons, to reduce this dose to one grain, morning, noon, and evening. Patients, says the doctor, are less heated by the remedy and can use it longer.

Tonic Lotions for Fluxes.—Two spoonfuls of common brandy with twice as much cold water. Wash well the parts affected.

Soothing and refreshing medicament when the organs are inflamed or puffed.

Local bleeding by leeches—fomentations—baths prepared with decoction of marshmallow leaves, and others, with nitrate of potassium.

The boils, as I have observed, sometimes occasion fluxes in the organs. The disease must be treated methodically, and every thing abstained from, calculated to change the flux or irritate, which is more dangerous than the irritation itself.

Mixture against softening the bones.

Powdered oyster shells . . .	4 grs.
Root of garance powder . . .	2 grs.

Mix together and divide in doses of one scruple Patients should take daily, two or thee doses in sugar-water.

The following preparation is considered to repair the substance of the body when exhaustion has been extreme in consequence of the vice we have been

combating. Beat all together till this form a thick mixture.

The whole is taken in the twenty-four hours in spoonfuls. If the stomach need stimulating take in each spoonful a slight infusion of mint or sole.

Cream	6 ozs.
Yolk of egg	2 ozs.
Sugar	1 oz
Water of Cannelle orgee . .	6 grs

VENUS'S ALBUM; or; Rose Buds of Love, comprising a first rate collection of amatory tales, intrigues, adventures and amours, also, amatory poetry and songs, anecdotes, conundrums, witticisms, faux pas, funny slips, &c. Four colored plates. Price, 50 cents.

THE TWO LOVES; or, Fred in a Fix. A first rate amatory romance, recently published in Paris. This is one of Paul de Kock's best productions. Illustrated with four beautifully colored engravings. Price 50 cents.

THE GAY GRISETTES AND THEIR YOUNG LOVERS. Being a peculiar, piquant, and graphic description of the manners and morals of the "free and easy" society in Paris. Price 25 cents.

HENRY; or, The Life of a Libertine. This novelette portrays in a lively manner Henry's intrigues with the "belles dames" of Paris. A brilliant effort of Paul de Kock. Price 25 cents.

GUSTAVUS, the Don Juan of France. Universally acknowledged to be one of the best of its class. Price 25 cents.

JOHN, the Darling of the Ladies. Here we have an exciting relation of John's experience as a "Fast Man," his adventures are startling. Price 25 cents.

MELTING MOMENTS; or, Love Among the Roses. This is a story of the Passions. A Tale calculated to excite the tenderest emotions. Price 25 cents.

ARISTOTLE'S COMPLETE WORKS, Illustrated. Price 50 cents.

ARISTOTLE'S MASTERPIECE, Illustrated.—Price 25 cents.

MEMOIRS OF A WOMAN OF PLEASURE, OR, THE SINGULAR AND SURPRISING ADVENTURES OF THEMIDORE AND ROZETTE. A most excellent translation from the French; interspersed with Amorous Narratives never surpassed in richness of description or elegance of illustration. Price 25 cents.

MEMOIRS OF A MAN OF PLEASURE; OR, THE AMOURS, INTRIGUES AND ADVENTURES OF SIR CHARLES MANLY. In this work all the arcana of nature are laid open and philosophy applied to illustrate that heavenly passion which entrances the soul with maddening extacy, and makes man ambitious of no other paradise but that of Beauty. This is generally supposed to be, in reality, The Life of Sir Charles Sedley, written by himself, in King Charles's Merry Days, but which he afterwards strove to suppress. The copy from which it was taken, was bought at the Duke of York's Sale, at a cost of one thousand dollars. Embellished with numerous elegant engravings. Price 50 cents.

PAUL DE KOCK'S LAST.—CERISETTE; OR, THE AMOROUS ADVENTURES OF AN ACTRESS, showing, however low a woman may have fallen, that with courage and energy she may recover her position in society. "This last work of Paul De Kock displays greater wit, more pathos, and a greater variety of character than any which have hitherto emanated from his pen."—*Revue de deux Mondes*

INTRIGUES OF THREE DAYS. An amusing collection of facetious tales of love and gallantry, that entrances the soul with maddening extacy, and makes man ambitious of no other paradise but that of beauty. Few men can read this book without experiencing some emotion. Illustrated.

AUGUSTA CLAYTON; written by the young lady herself. This is the most celebrated romance in the language. Its rich and voluptuous scenes strike powerfully upon the imagination and we no longer wonder that every one reads it and all affect to condemn it. Perhaps no work of an amatory and intriguing nature ever excited such a sensation in society as that produced by this book. Beautifully illustrated.

THE ADVENTURES OF DON PEDRO in Search of a Wife. Showing the perilous chances a man runs in the pursuit of courtship; the difficulty of finding a woman with an unplucked rose, and the probabilities, when taking a wife, that he has taken up, not a a Virgin Bride, but the cast off mistress of some amorous libertine. Also embracing the histories of an Amorous Young Heiress, an Intriguing Widow, a Youthful Voluptuary, the Amours of a Lively Monk, and the Seductive Powers of Three "Private Sisters. Embellished.

THE BAR-MAID OF THE OLD POINT HOUSE. Being the secret history of the Amours and Intrigue of a Bar-Maid whose amorous disposition and voluptuous achievements on the couch of Cupid, made her the envy of her own sex, and the admiration of the world. Contains also the account of her marriage after years of indiscriminate voluptuous connections to her first love, Peter the Conscript.

MEMOIRS OF AN OLD MAN OF TWENty-five. Being a series of Voluptuous Intrigues and Amatory Adventures of a Youthful Libertine. The most voluptuous, soul enchanting scenes are depicted with glowing eloquence of language, such as none but one who has felt and acted in them could imagine. In this book is displayed a picture of senuality and passion seldom exhibited to the public. This celebrated work has many imitators, but no rivals, and it may fairly be said, that for beauty of description, it stands without an equal. Illustrated with eight engravings.

JULIA; or, Where is the Woman that wouldn't?

&c. Being the amorous history of a young lady of ardent imagination, who, amidst, the most voluptuous temptations to gratify the sensual passions succeeds in preserving her personal honor from destruction. In this work are depicted the philosophic passion of Adolpho, the daring licentiousness of St. Aubyn, the history of Celina the courtezan, the fury of Alaerti the castrate, the tender affections of Bellegarde, and the insinuating tribadism of Caroline. Illustrated.

TALES OF TWILIGHT; or, Entre Chien et

Loup, containing the adventures and intrigues of a company of ladies, prior to their marriage, as related by themselves, showing the deceits practised upon men by the artful, the prudent, the modest, and demure maidens, on parting with that treasure which never can be restored. Translated from the French of Madame la Countess. A most delightful work, remarkable for its simplicity and luscious variety. Most married women will smile, but they cannot, amongst themselves, deny its truth, or that they had sacrificed to Venus before Hymen had consecrated the altar. Four plates.

THE CHILD OF NATURE; or the History of

a Young Lady of Luxurious Temperament and Pruient Imagination who experiences repeatedly the dangers of seduction, which are described in glowing colors, and whose escapes from the snares of love are truly wonderful. Depicting many and various luscious scenes with her paramours, and in the end proving herself to be

"The child of nature improved by chance."

This curious history, showing the power of woman over man, when she can control her passion, is illustrated with engravings of singularly interesting and exciting situations, and will be found the most pleasing and amorous narrative ever submitted to the public.

VENUS IN THE CLOISTER; or, Sainfroid and

Eulalia. The intrigues and amours of Sainfroid, a Jesuit, and Eulalia, a nun, developing the progress of seduction of a highly educated young lady, who became, by the foulest sophistry and treachery, the victim of debauchery and libertinism. Translated from the French, and illustrated with beautiful plates. A most interesting and amorous work, especially written to warn the fair sex of the wiles and artifices to which they are exposed by the unpitying lust of man

THE INTRIGUES AND SECRET AMOURS

OF NAPOLEON. Being a complete history of his loves and amorous adventures with several celebrated women of France. Also containing the secret interviews of M'me Murat with the Swiss peasant, the Lover and the Dentist, together with many other curious intrigues. Also a full account of the seduction of his cousin, Leonora, interspersed with numerous engravings. Price 25.

BROTHER JAMES. By Paul DeKock. Trans-

lated from the French by Henry Foster. This tale is not generally included in his works, but is always recognised as genuine. In no respect inferior to his "Gustavus." Illustrated. Price 25.

SECRET HABITS OF THE FEMALE SEX;

or, The Mysteries of Hymen Unveiled. Being a treatise on sexual debility, in both man and woman, with the methods by which it may be known, in any case, on whose part the imperfection lies, and instruction for the prevention and remedy. Also the consequence of self abuse, illustrated by numerous very remarkable cases, with complete and ample directions for ladies to manage themselves in the nicest and most delicate article of their health, with innocent and effectual medicines and recipes for all the complaints incident to both sexes. Illustrated with four beautiful colored engravings. Price 25.

In Press, will be ready in a few days, a new copyright book, entitled

"THE MYSTERIES OF WOMEN," containing

a dissertation on the necessity of marriage, precocity onanism, propensities of women, effects of wedlock, instructions in courting, with a cure for love, effects of celibacy, notions of beauty, sudden love, delay and dalliance, taking women upon trial, tax upon bachelors, amorous organizations, the courtezan reclaimed, on mutual propensities, pregnancy, various ways of courting, advice to the true lover, sexual intercourse, limitations of life, the inclined plane, dancing and riding considered, and the cause of sterility explained, how to procure a family, stimulants, natural effects of union, with many other useful instructions. From the French of Jean Dubois. Price 25.

THE MYSTERIES OF VENUS; or, Lessons of

Love, Exemplified in the amatory life and adventures of Kitty Pry Reprinted from the original edition of 1783, without abridgment. Embellished with curious plates. Price 25.

1398

№ 1398.

HQ 447
D81

1398

№ 1398.

HQ 447
D81